

Kentucky Qualification System (KQS): Standard Operating Guide (SOG)



2024 Edition

Version 1

This SOG helps implement and manage KQS, a relatively new initiative, in the Commonwealth. As an SOG supporting a new program, the Advisory Committee and supporting Qualification Review Boards expect revisions and changes as the program evolves. This section records revisions to the original document to promote understanding and help maintain visibility of improvements.

Date of Revision	Description of Revision(s)

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INTRODUCTION

The introduction contains the foundational elements of this SOG, and addresses important information such as this document's purpose and how the document may be updated. A team developed the SOG over the course of 6 months, with the Advisory Committee and the Incident Management Team (IMT) Qualification Review Board providing input and ultimately approval of its contents. The writing team consisted of the following personnel: Mr. Dustin Heiser, Mr. Jerrod Dean, Ms. Jennifer Hitch, Dr. Charlie Harris, Ms. Charla Sands, Mr. Todd Schulkers, and Mr. Kevin Vogelpohl.

Purpose of the KQS Standard Operating Guide

This document presents the implementation and management of the National Qualification System, or NQS, for Emergency Management in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Kentucky's implementation of NQS for the training and certification of Incident Management Teams (IMTs) and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Assistance Teams is called the Kentucky Qualification System or KQS.

Legal Basis for the Kentucky Qualification System Guide

Kentucky Emergency Management is the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) for the implementation and operation of KQS within the Commonwealth for its IMTs and EOC Assistance Teams. KRS 39A.050 provides legal sufficiency with the enumeration of the powers, authorities, and duties of the Division of Emergency Management.

Objective of the Kentucky Qualification System (KQS) Guide

The overall objective of this document is to assist stakeholders in the development of processes for identifying, qualifying, certifying and credentialing deployable emergency personnel. KQS concentrates upon three steps: qualification, certification, and credentialing of personnel, as shown in the illustration on the following page. The process begins with an emergency professional taking required training and classes and obtaining documented work experience and ends with the person receiving certification for deployment in designated positions based upon their qualifications.



Strategic Goal of KQS

The overall strategic goal of KQS is to establish and maintain credentialed personnel for IMTs and EOC Assistance Teams that can assist within the Commonwealth, or outside the state, in response to disasters, incidents, and planned events.

KQS Mission Statement

The Kentucky Qualification System (KQS) Validates Standardized Skills And Competencies For Individuals Managing Complex Incidents and Events.

KQS Vision Statement

Credentialing The Professionals of Today For The Incidents and Events of Tomorrow.

Annual Review of SOG and Updates

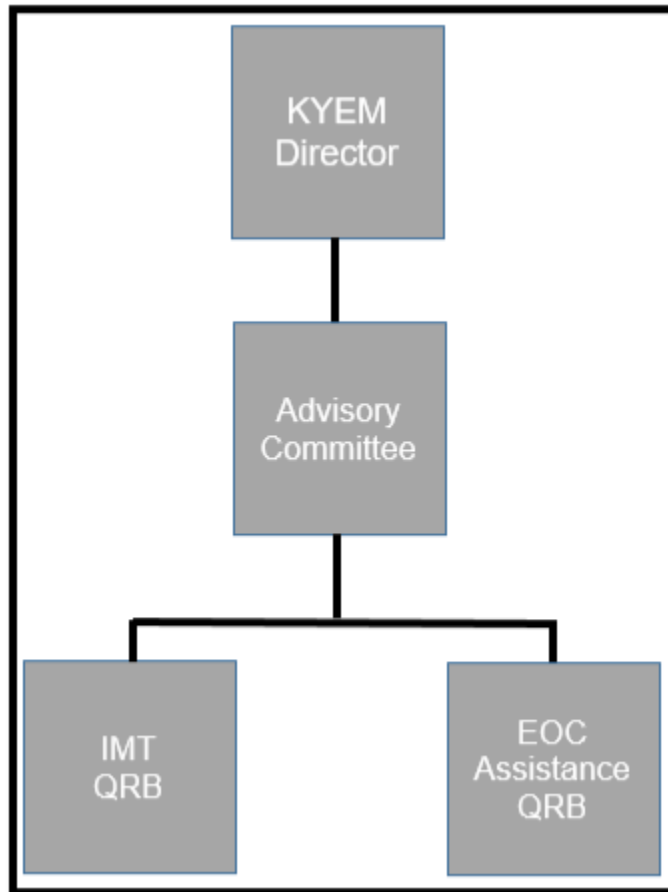
The SOG is a living document and is expected to evolve over time. At the very least, the SOG will be reviewed once per calendar year by a subcommittee formed from the Advisory Committee and the Qualification Review Boards. All proposed additions and revisions to the SOG must be presented on two separate occasions to the Advisory Committee before voting, or in other words, two readings are required for changes.

COMMITTEES

Standing committees, composed primarily of emergency management, emergency support function, and emergency response professionals, manage KQS in the Commonwealth. The committees serve not only to ensure expertise in the process, but also to allow for diversity and the inclusion of different perspectives into the KQS process. This results in a more expansive knowledge and experience base, and therefore, more effective decision-making. By design, the committees operate continuously, and indefinitely, to support KQS.

Supporting Committee Structures

Two separate committee structures provide expertise and recommendations to the Director of Emergency Management for the overall process and goal of training and certifying personnel to effectively perform in disasters and events within and outside the Commonwealth. Specifically, the Advisory Committee and two Qualification Review Boards (QRBs) compose the committee structures, as illustrated below.



Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee performs a critical role in KQS. The committee brings together KQS stakeholders, statewide, to help oversee KQS and make the program as successful as possible.

Mission and Composition

The Advisory Committee directly advises and assists the Director of Emergency Management with the development of KQS as its primary mission. The Advisory Committee contributes to the overall direction of KQS by specifically performing the following actions:

- a. Establishes the Qualification Review Boards (QRBs) and provides support and oversight.
- b. Receives and evaluates semiannual progress reports from the Regional All Hazard Incident Management Teams (AHIMTs) regarding team status, identifying strengths, weaknesses, and needs.
- c. Identifies issues and recommends proactive solutions to potential problems related to the program.
- d. Establishes other committees as necessary, including a Policy and Procedures Subcommittee, initially.
- e. Develops plans for continual improvement.
- f. Committee Composition. The Advisory Committee consists of 10 voting members, two nonvoting members, and the Committee Chair who exercises a vote only to break ties. This makes a total of 13 members as displayed in the following illustration.



The following individuals compose the committee, representing specific organizations and Emergency Management functions:

(1) Three representatives from Kentucky Emergency Management (KYEM): State Training Officer (STO), Operations and Planning Branch Manager, and a KYEM Area Manager Representative.

(2) Three representatives from the Kentucky Emergency Management Association (KEMA).

(a) One Representative from Districts 1 through 5.

(b) One Representative from Districts 6 through 10.

(c) One Representative elected at large.

(3) One Representative from the Kentucky Department for Public Health.

(4) One Representative from the Kentucky Energy and Environment Cabinet.

(5) One Representative from the Kentucky Fire Commission.

(6) One Representative from the Kentucky State Police.

(7) The KYEM Assistant Director of Operations (ADO) leads the group as chairperson but is a nonvoting member unless needed to break a tie vote.

(8) The In-service Training Supervisor for KYEM is the nonvoting secretary of the board.

(9) The committee will also have assigned legal counsel as a nonvoting member attending some of the meetings.

Minutes

The In-service Training Supervisor for KYEM compiles minutes for Advisory Committee meetings and shares the minutes with committee members. The Advisory Committee approves minutes as part of their regular meeting agenda.

Business Rules

The Advisory Committee operates with the following business rules:

a. Length of Service. Initial Advisory Committee members serve for two or three years as worked out between the committee member, the member's agency, and KYEM. The intention of the KYEM Director is for initial members to serve long enough

to get KQS established and then facilitate voluntary member replacement that does not create a deficit of knowledge on the committee. Committee members serving after the initial members serve for two years. For initial or subsequent members an additional one or two-year term can be served with the approval of the committee member, the member's organization, and the KYEM Director.

b. Use of Proxies and Attendance. Committee members may send a proxy to meetings, but proxies cannot attend the majority of the meetings within a given calendar year. To facilitate the proxy's ability to effectively contribute to the committee's work, the proxy will be a suitable representative of the member's organization. The proxy will be designated in advance by the member's organization, and the name of the proxy will be shared with the Secretary of the Advisory Committee on an annual basis or when there is a change. Committee members may be excused from meetings by the Committee Chair.

c. Quorum and Voting. A simple majority of the committee must be present, virtually or in-person, to constitute a quorum, pass resolutions, process QRB recommendations, and approve minutes. Proxies count towards a quorum, and a proxy's vote is counted the same as a committee member's.

d. Review of QRB Submissions. Based upon the recommendation of the QRBs, the Advisory Committee reviews the lists of personnel submitted by the QRBs for certification and credentialing, or for additional training and/or justification, and submits their recommendations to the Director of Emergency Management within 30 days of notification. The Advisory Committee will also review QRB recommendations of KQS-credentialed individuals to serve as mentors and evaluators and presents the committee's decisions to the Director.

e. Open Meetings. The meetings of the Advisory Committee are open to the public.

f. Exceptions to Open Meetings. All meetings of a quorum of the members of any public agency at which any public business is discussed or at which any action is taken by the agency, shall be public meetings, open to the public at all times, except as described in KRS 61.810.

(1) Meetings in which federal or state law specifically require to be conducted in privacy.

(2) Meetings where the purpose of the discussions is to educate the members on specific issues.

g. Closed Sessions. Closed Sessions may be scheduled if notice is given in a regular open meeting of the general nature of the business to be discussed in the Closed Session, the reason for the Closed Session, and the specific provision of KRS 61.810 authorizing the Closed Session. Closed Sessions may be held only after a motion is made and carried by a majority vote in an open, public session. No final

action, official business, or voting may occur during a Closed Session. No matters may be discussed during a Closed Session other than those publicly announced prior to convening the Closed Session. Closed Sessions are not limited to, but may be restricted to Advisory Committee members and supporting staff.

h. Notice of Meetings. Notice of the time, place, and draft agenda items to be considered at each meeting shall be given electronically to all members of the Advisory Committee prior to all meetings. Notice of the meeting shall be posted on the KYEM website. If a member of the public or media wishes to address the Commission, they must contact the Advisory Council Chair or designee via electronic format within forty-eight (48) hours of a scheduled meeting and provide their 1) affiliation, 2) topic of discussion, and 3) contact information.

i. Rules of Order. The deliberation of all meetings of the Committee and any subcommittees shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, when not inconsistent with this SOG, or with any special rules of order adopted by the Advisory Committee.

j. Agenda. An agenda will be provided for each Advisory Committee meeting by the Secretary.

Qualification Review Boards (QRBs)

The qualification process in Kentucky consists of a performance-based system. Qualification is based upon completing all of the criteria set forth for a specific position in an IMT or an Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Assistance Team. To properly manage the qualification process of KQS, the Commonwealth employs two separate qualification boards. One board handles IMT personnel, while the other focuses upon EOC Assistance Team members. Each board meets at least semiannually, but not in the same quarter. Monthly meetings may be necessary when the boards are initially established and operational.

IMT QRB

As mentioned above, the IMT QRB handles applications from personnel who desire certification and credentialing for specific positions on an IMT. Due to recent disasters in Kentucky, the Commonwealth's IMT community rapidly progressed with the formation and deployment of IMTs. Consequently, the KQS SOG initially emphasizes the IMT certification process.

Mission and Composition

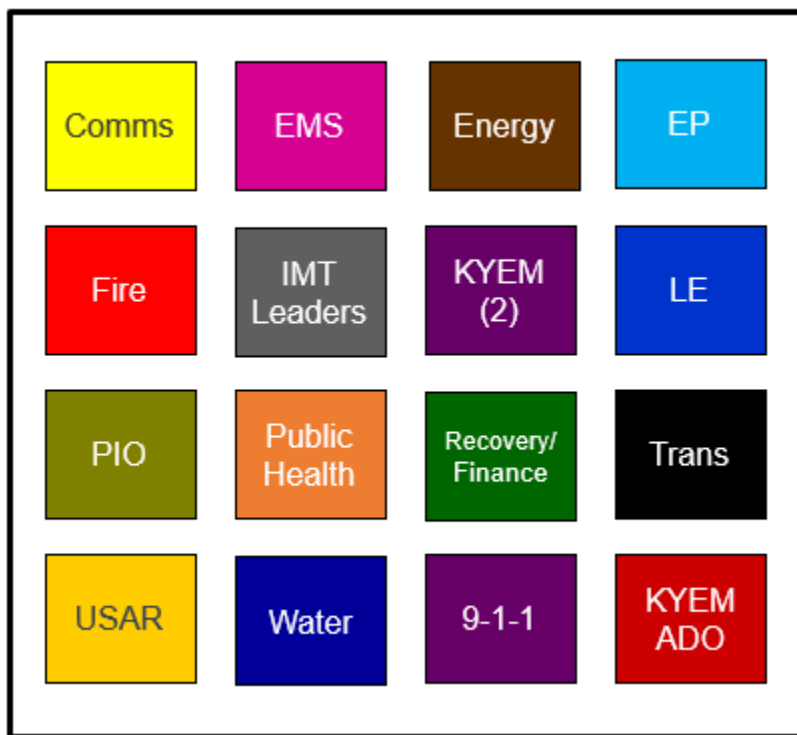
The IMT QRB concentrates upon qualifying personnel to serve on IMTs in the Commonwealth. The IMT QRB consists of 16 voting members, with a total of 17 members.

a. The Committee has one representative from the following 14 organizations and functions: Communications, Emergency Medical Services, Energy, Environmental Protection, Fire, IMT Leadership, Law Enforcement, Public Health, Public Information Officer, Transportation, Recovery or Finance, Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), Water, and 9-1-1/Telecommunication.

b. Two representatives from KYEM serve on the committee.

c. The KYEM ADO leads the committee and exercises a tiebreaker vote. The graphic below illustrates the committee's composition.

d. The KYEM KQS Manager serves as Secretary of the Board but is not a voting or participatory member.



Minutes

The In-service Training Supervisor for KYEM compiles minutes for the IMT QRB and shares the minutes with committee members. The QRB approves minutes as part of their regular meeting agenda.

Business Rules

The IMT QRB operates with the following business rules:

a. Length of Service. Initial QRB members serve for two or three years as worked out between the board member, the board member's agency, and KYEM. The intention

of the KYEM Director is for initial board members to serve long enough to get the process established and then facilitate voluntary board member replacement that does not create a deficit of knowledge on the board. Board members serving after the initial members serve for two years. For initial or subsequent members, an additional one to two-year term can be served with the approval of the board member, the board member's organization, and the KYEM Director.

b. Certification. If not already certified through KQS in their subject matter, board members are encouraged to be actively working towards certification and subsequent credentialing. Actively working towards certification is defined as a PTB in progress, or the enrollment and taking of necessary ICS courses, or the preparation of a packet for recognition of historical learning and experience.

c. Use of Proxies and Attendance. A QRB member may send a proxy to meetings, but proxies cannot attend the majority of the meetings within a given calendar year. To facilitate the proxy's ability to effectively contribute to the board's work, the proxy will be a suitable representative of the member's organization, knowledgeable of absent member's subject area. The proxy will be designated in advance by the member's organization, and the name of the proxy will be shared with the Secretary of the QRB on an annual basis or when there is a change. QRB members may be excused from meetings by the Board Chair.

d. Quorum and Voting. A simple majority of the board must be present, virtually or in-person, to constitute a quorum and conduct business. This includes processing a packet for certification, whether recommending certification and credentialing to the Advisory Committee or recommending the return of the packet to the candidate for additional information and/or experiences. Additionally, the subject matter expert for the applicant's discipline must be present and approve the application.

e. Processing of Packets and Timelines. The QRB submits the names of applicants who are recommended for certification and credentialing to the Advisory Committee within 30 days of deliberation. The board also notifies the Advisory Committee of the individuals whom the board recommends receive additional training and experiences before certification and credentialing, and those who need to provide additional information, within the same time period.

(1) The QRB briefly states the reason(s) for their determination in the communication to the Advisory Committee. The Chair and the Secretary of the QRB take a leading role in preparing this communication.

(2) The QRB also makes recommendations to the Advisory Committee of KQS-credentialed individuals, who in the QRB's estimation, could effectively serve as mentors and evaluators in support of PTB issuance. Mentors and evaluators may have multiple trainees assigned; however, they are limited to the normal span of control.

f. Open Meetings. The meetings of the QRB are open to the public.

g. Exceptions to Open Meetings. All meetings of a quorum of the members of any public agency at which any public business is discussed or at which any action is taken by the agency shall be public meetings, open to the public at all times, except as described in KRS 61.810.

(1) Meetings in which federal or state law specifically require to be conducted in privacy.

(2) Meetings where the purpose of the discussions is to educate the members on specific issues.

h. Closed Sessions. Closed Sessions may be scheduled if notice is given in a regular open meeting of the general nature of the business to be discussed in the Closed Session, the reason for the Closed Session, and the specific provision of KRS 61.810 authorizing the Closed Session. Closed Sessions may be held only after a motion is made and carried by a majority vote in an open, public session. No final action, official business, or voting may occur during a Closed Session. No matters may be discussed during a Closed Session other than those publicly announced prior to convening the Closed Session. Closed Sessions are not limited to, but may be restricted to, QRB members and supporting staff.

i. Notice of Meetings. Notice of the time, place, and draft agenda items to be considered at each meeting shall be given electronically to all members of the QRB prior to all meetings. This information may also include information relating to the review of candidate packets, to include PTBs and similar documents. Notice of the meeting shall be posted on the KYEM website. If a member of the public or media wishes to address the Commission, they must contact the Board Chair or designee via electronic format within forty-eight (48) hours of a scheduled meeting and provide their 1) affiliation, 2) topic of discussion, and 3) contact information.

j. Rules of Order. The deliberation of all meetings of the QRB shall be governed by *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*, when not inconsistent with this SOG, or with any special rules of order adopted by the QRB.

k. Agenda, Packet Review Preparation, and Minutes. An agenda will be provided for each QRB Meeting by the Board's Secretary who will also prepare all submitted candidate packets for virtual and in-person review by the board. The Board Secretary will provide draft minutes of a meeting in time for review and approval at the following QRB meeting.

EOC Assistance Team QRB

At the time of the publication of this edition of the KQS SOG, the EOC Assistance Team QRB is in the process of being formed. The next edition of the SOG will provide details on the committee, its composition, and business rules.

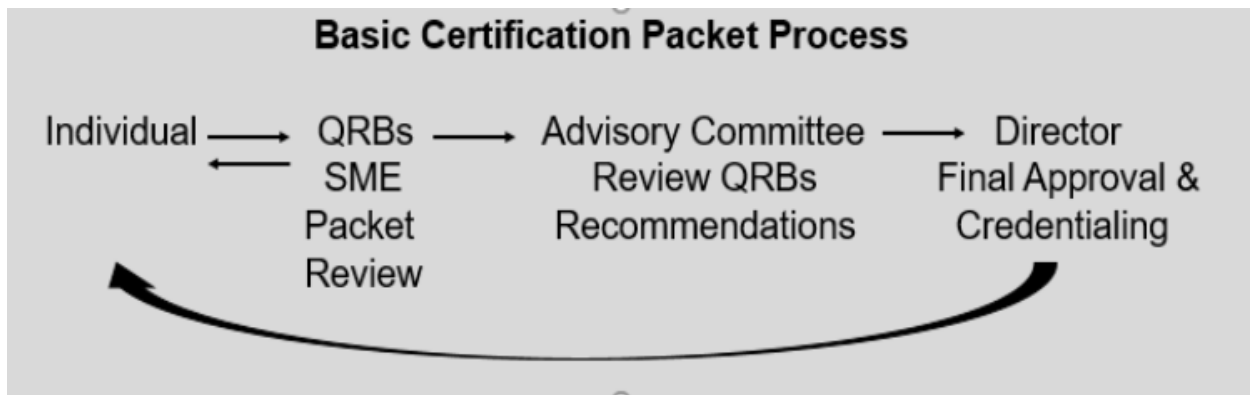
CERTIFICATION AND CREDENTIALING THROUGH PTBS

Introduction

The desired end state for the Kentucky Qualification System (KQS) centers upon the existence of many IMT and EOC Assistance Team members, fully trained and ready to deploy inside and outside the Commonwealth. The proof that an individual has completed all education, training, and other requirements will be an issued credential, a badge, which lists the person's credentialed positions in addition to providing identification, along with a credentialing memorandum from the Director of Emergency Management. This section covers how a person seeks certification and credentialing by way of filled-out PTBs from service on an IMT or EOC Assistance Team.

Basic Certification Packet Process

The whole process begins and ends with the individual seeking certification. The person seeking certification completes a Basic Certification Packet (BCP) that is reviewed by a board of subject matter experts called the Qualification Review Board (QRB). The QRB approves the BCP or returns the BCP to the individual for additional information or clarification. The QRB's recommendations receive review from the Advisory Committee before names are submitted to the Director of Emergency Management for final approval and credentialing. This process is illustrated below.



The BCP, at the very least, consists of the following five items:

- a. Statement from the Person Stating Why They Seek Certification and Credentialing.
- b. Completed PTB(s) with supporting documents, such as Incident Personnel Performance Rating(s) (ICS 225) or Equivalent(s) Covering Each of the Operational Periods and Incident/Event Action Plans.
- c. Certificates Showing Completion of Required Training.

d. Professional Resume.

e. Agreement to a national or state-wide Background Check Completed within 6 Months of BCP Submission. Applicant may provide explanation of issues found on their record other than minor traffic violations.

Other artifacts showing competence may be included, but they are not required. Examples of other artifacts include, but are not limited to Letter(s) of Support for Certification from an IMT or EOC Assistance Team Leadership.

Position Task Books (PTBs)

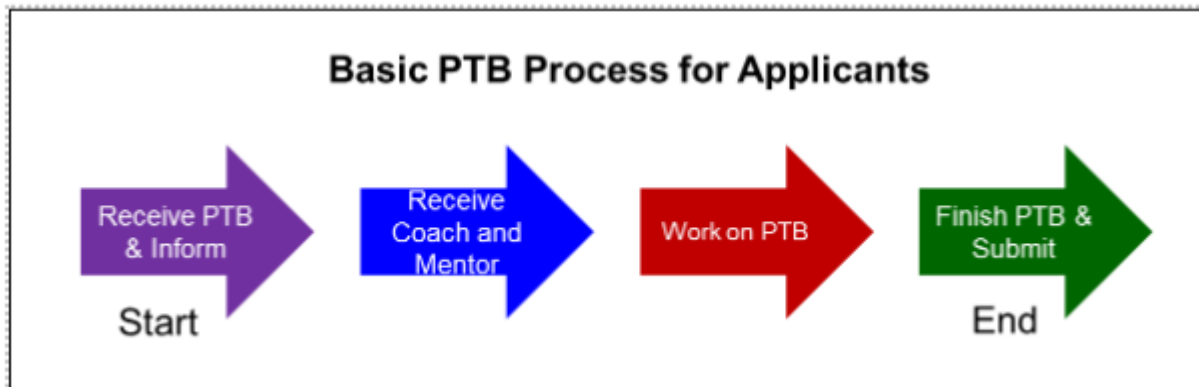
For many persons seeking certification in a position or positions on an IMT or EOC Assistance Team, the main vehicle to achieve this will be a Position Task Book (PTB). The PTB serves as a document to evaluate the performance of a person in a specific position in an IMT or EOC Assistance Team. In most instances, **the PTB constitutes the main part of a BCP.**

The PTBs contain the identified competencies, behaviors, and tasks required to become qualified for a specific ICS position. Additionally, the State Training Officer (STO) has identified the required training for each IMT and EOC Assistance Team position. Since many versions of PTBs are available from various organizations, persons seeking certification should contact their IMT or EOC Assistance Team Leadership, or the State Training Office, to obtain the PTB version in use in the Commonwealth for their desired position. Additionally, KYEM intends to provide links to approved PTBs from the KQS Webpage.

KQS PTB Process

Upon receipt of a PTB, the applicant must state their intention of completing the PTB, in email, to IMT or EOC Assistance Team leadership, as well as to the State KQS Manager. An individual may have a maximum number of two assigned PTBs at a given time and have a maximum number of 3 years to complete the PTB(s) from the declaration of intention. Extensions beyond the 3-year limit must be approved by the Director of KYEM. Importantly, there is no limit to the number of positions in an IMT or EOC Assistance Team that a person may be credentialed to perform.

After declaring their intention to complete a PTB, the applicant will receive a coach and mentor to assist in the process. The evaluator of the PTB must be already credentialed in the applicant's position. This is a key element of the PTB process, and one that assists in overall PTB completion. This process is outlined in the following illustration.



PTBs can be electronically edited or handwritten in ink or a mix of both. All signatures and initials on the PTB must be “wet”, meaning signed with a pen. As part of the BCP, the completed PTB must be scanned and submitted to the KYEM Training Section at Training@ky-em.org. The KYEM Training Section will acknowledge the receipt of the BCP to the applicant in email and will forward the BCP to the appropriate QRB.

IMT or EOC Assistance Team leadership may wish to review the PTB for completeness and quality before submission. Submitted, but incomplete, PTBs will be returned to the applicant by the QRB. Additionally, the applicable QRB may wish to meet with the applicant in order to fully understand their submission. KYEM is working to provide an online database to afford the ability to applicants to directly upload their own information (BCP) to the QRB.

PTB Evaluators

PTB evaluators must be credentialed for the position(s) they are evaluating. Their credentials must be present at the time of their work as an evaluator. The credentialing of PTB evaluators may be due to Historical Recognition of Prior Learning and Experience (HR), or the approval of a submitted BCP to KQS, or due to the credentialing from another Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) such as the state of Tennessee or FEMA.

PTB Task (Competency and Behavior) Evaluation

KQS allows for a variety of circumstances in which the applicant can perform the tasks for evaluation. Importantly, the applicant must show proficiency to evaluators in all the Tasks, Behaviors, and Competencies of an issued PTB. In order to show proficiency, the applicant must exhibit mastery of a task in more than one event and/or time period. Each event has its own PTB Code. These codes are shown on the next page for reference purposes. To receive credit, **applicants must use an event that is approved by the issued PTB.**

<u>PTB Code</u>	<u>Explanation</u>
Code C:	Task Performed in Classroom Setting, Seminar, or Workshop.
Code E:	Task Performed During Full-scale Exercise with Equipment Deployed Under ICS.
Code F:	Task Perform During a Functional Exercise Managed Under ICS.
Code I:	Task Performed During an Incident or Event Managed Under ICS.
Code J:	Task Performed During Day-to-day Job Duties.
Code T:	Task Performed During Tabletop Exercise.

Qualifying Events for PTBs

As shown above, a variety of simulated and real world experiences may be used for qualifying events for PTBs. In order to facilitate a broad experience level to support task competence, KQS also fosters a variety of experiences. Most completed PTBs will have both exercise and event or incident experiences.

KQS employs a straightforward metric for PTBs, as displayed in the below illustration. All experiences must be of a Type 3 Incident/ Event or above.

PTB Qualifying Events Chart
A Minimum of One Type 3, or Above, Exercise and One Type 3, or Above, Incident / Event Per Task.
or
Two or More Type 3, or Above, Incidents / Events Per Task.

PTBs and Educational Requirements

KQS requires the successful completion of specific classes for certification in a particular IMT or EOC Assistance Team position. **This is in addition to the completed PTB.** The required classes are shown in the chart on the next page. Course completion certificates are submitted as part of the BCP. The course must be the version currently accepted by FEMA. For example, ICS-300 must have a completion date of 2019 or later.

Position Class	IS 100	G 191	ICS 200	ICS 300	O 305	ICS 400	IS 700	IS 800	IS 2200	G 2300	PSTN Specific
Unit Leader IMT PSTN	X		X	X		X	X	X	X		X
CMD & GEN Staff IMT PSTN	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Unit Leader EOC Asst Team PSTN	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
CMD & GEN Staff EOC Asst Team PSTN	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes:
For credentialing purposes, the person must successfully complete the position-specific training offered for the desired role. KQS recognizes equivalent training.

PTB Availability

KQS intends to make available, to those desiring certification and credentialing, all available PTBs. **KQS concentrates upon Type 3 IMT and EOC Assistance Team PTBs.**

Type 3 IMT PTBs and IMT Organization

Although FEMA has created over 77 PTBs for IMTs at the time of this SOG’s publication, Kentucky concentrates upon PTBs for key positions in its Type 3 IMTs, listed further in this section. However, a PTB may be issued for any position on a Type 3 IMT to fulfil a perceived deployment need.

Regional Type 3 IMTs in the Commonwealth may task organize their IMTs, to add or limit specific positions as necessary, due to expected deployments and to fill gaps in capabilities. Deployments outside the Commonwealth, such as to fulfill an EMAC request, require agreement between the deploying IMT and KYEM for approval of the specific organization, and therefore positions, of the deploying IMT.

Type 3 IMT Key Position List

KQS initially focuses upon the 25 Type 3 IMT positions detailed below. Each position, except where noted, would require a completed PTB for certification, and ultimately, credentialing. The intent of the Director of KYEM is to deploy only

credentialed personnel in IMTs to provide the best possible support to those in need. Specifically, these positions are:

- a. Incident Commander (IC)
 - (1) Deputy Incident Commander (DPIC)
- b. Operations Section Chief (OSC)
 - (1) Deputy Operations Section Chief (DOSC)
 - (2) Division Supervisor (DIVS)
 - (3) Task Force/ Strike Team Leader (TFLD)
- c. Planning Section Chief (PSC)
 - (1) Deputy Planning Section Chief (DPSC)
 - (2) Situation Unit Leader (SITL)
 - (3) Resources Unit Leader (RESL)
 - (4) Documentation Unit Leader (DOCL)
- d. Logistics Section Chief (LSC)
 - (1) Deputy Logistics Section Chief (DLSC)
 - (2) Communication Unit Leader (COML)
 - (3) Medical Unit Leader (MEDL)
 - (4) Ground Support Unit Leader (GSUL)
 - (5) Logistics/Cache Support Agents (trainee or non-credentialed)
 - (6) Supply Unit Leader (SPUL)
- e. Finance/Administrative Section Chief (FASC)
- f. Public Information Officer (PIO)
- g. Liaison Officer (LOFR)
 - (1) Field Agency Representative (AREP)

- h. Safety Officer (SOFR)
- i. GIS Specialist (non-credentialed) (GISS)
- j. Technical Specialist (non-credentialed) (THSP)

EOC Assistance Team PTBs

At the time of the KQS SOG's printing, states in FEMA Region IV, including the Commonwealth of Kentucky, are working to develop common PTBs for EOC Assistance Teams. At the present, representatives from the region intend to start with the following ten EOC positions; however, in Kentucky the intent is to also start with the specific Emergency Support Function (ESF) positions in the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC):

- a. EOC Director
- b. Planning Section Chief
- c. Operations Section Chief
- d. Logistics Section Chief
- e. Finance Section Chief
- f. Public Information Section Chief
- g. Situation Unit Leader
- h. Resource Unit Leader
- i. Documentation Unit Leader
- j. Legal Representative
- k. Agency or ESF Representative / Liaison

HISTORICAL RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING AND EXPERIENCE (HR)

Historical Recognition of Prior Learning and Experience (HR) provides an alternative path to certification and credentialing for persons with significant, prior IMT or EOC experience. This pathway does not replace PTBs for persons starting to work in IMTs and EOC Assistance Teams. HR, however, does provide an option for persons with existing positional experience with IMTs and EOC Assistance Teams. **With HR, a person need not perform, again, in positions in which they have already successfully demonstrated competence.** KQS emphasizes HR during calendar years 2024 and 2025, but will still retain HR after that as an option for experienced individuals seeking certification and credentialing.

Objective and Initial Specific Impact of HR

The overall objective of HR is to recognize the expertise of professionals who have been successfully performing specific ICS positions for significant periods of time. The implementation of HR in the early deployment of KQS affords the Commonwealth with the ability to assemble a cadre of qualified professionals to act as mentors, coaches, and evaluators, in support of the issuance of PTBs to persons starting their professional experience with IMTs and EOC Assistance Teams. All in all, HR facilitates a swifter initial implementation of KQS.

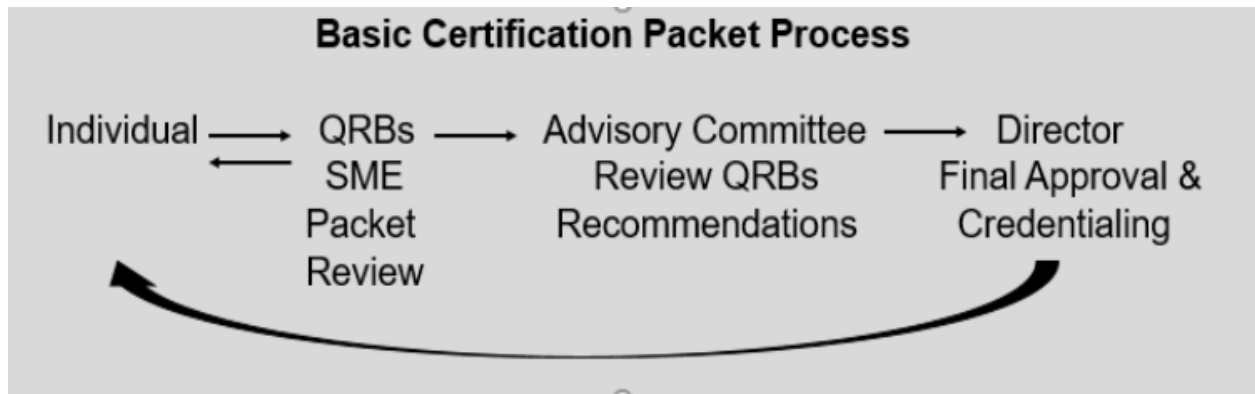
The Three HR Procedures

With HR, KQS maintains three separate procedures for individuals seeking certification and credentialing. The different procedures allow a person to select the best option that most clearly demonstrates their IMT and EOC positional experiences. The three procedures are subsequently referred to in this SOG as Procedure A, Procedure B, and Procedure C. Each possesses a nickname to illustrate its nature.

HR Procedure A - “PTB”

With Procedure A, a person uses PTBs, filled out after the conclusion of events or incidents, to demonstrate their competency for specific position. Here, the evaluator(s) for the PTB(s) must be someone who currently enjoys credentialing in the evaluated position by a recognized AHJ and was also present at the specific event or incident. Persons may draw upon events and incidents up to 5 years prior to the year of the submitted packet to the QRB and may show as many incidents and events as needed to cover all the enumerated tasks of the PTB.

Overall, Procedure A follows the same flow as for the Basic Certification Packet (BCP) with someone using a PTB. See the next illustration.



As alluded to above, the paperwork for a Procedure A submission is the same for the BCP, and at the very least, consists of the following five items:

- a. Statement from the Person Stating Why They Seek Certification and Credentialing. The statement should also state that it is a HR submission at the beginning and also designate the type of HR submission, in this case a Procedure A.
- b. Completed PTB(s) with supporting documents, such as Incident Personnel Performance Rating(s) (ICS 225) or Equivalent(s) Covering Each of the Operational Periods and Incident/Event Action Plans. Additionally, the person must attach to the PTB(s) a copy of the credentialing documents for the PTB evaluator(s) and include their contact information.
- c. Certificates Showing Completion of Required Training.
- d. Professional Resume.
- e. Agreement to a national or state-wide Background Check Completed within 6 Months of HR packet Submission. Applicant may provide explanation of issues found on their record other than minor traffic violations.

Other artifacts showing competence may be included, but they are not required. Examples of other artifacts include, but are not limited to Letter(s) of Support for Certification from an IMT or EOC Assistance Team Leadership.

Procedure A requires the same standard for qualifying events as for a person qualifying for a position for the first time. The following chart is also found in the earlier section of the SOG under PTBs.

PTB Qualifying Events Chart

A **Minimum of One** Type 3, or Above, Exercise and **One** Type 3, or Above, Incident / Event Per Task.

or

Two or More Type 3, or Above, Incidents / Events Per Task.

Procedure A Illustration

Candidate A desired certification and credentialing as an Operations Section Chief. Candidate A worked as an Operations Section Chief for 7 incidents in Kentucky and Indiana in the past 5 years. In four of the incidents, an IMT co-worker possessed certification as an Operations Section Chief and agreed to evaluate Candidate A's work in the applicable portions of the Operations Section Chief PTB. With the combination of evaluated tasks from all four incidents, the entire PTB was addressed. Since Candidate A already attended all necessary classes, including the Operations Section Chief Course, Candidate A submitted their packet and received approval.

HR Procedure B – “Portfolio”

While Procedure A provides a way forward for those persons who have worked an incident or event with a credentialed person, Procedure B gives an option to those persons who have not. By its very nature, Procedure B constitutes the most challenging and time consuming of the three HR options. With Procedure B, a person must construct a portfolio that discusses all of the tasks of a given PTB.

As with Procedure A, Procedure B requires specific documents, in some cases artifacts, to demonstrate task competency. A Procedure B packet should consist of the following items:

- a. Statement from the Person Stating Why They Seek Certification and Credentialing. The statement should also state that it is a HR submission at the beginning and also designate the type of HR submission, in this case a Procedure B.
- b. Personal Narrative for Each Task. A personal narrative must be developed for each task that clearly shows competency in the given PTB. The narrative for each task must at least show competency from at least two events as displayed in the “PTB Qualifying Events Chart” in this SOG.
- c. Inclusion of Artifacts to Substantiate Personal Narratives. For each task an artifact must be presented in addition to the personal narrative. The possible list of artifacts includes but is not limited to:

(1) Incident Action Plans / Event Action Plans.

(2) Incident Personnel Performance Rating(s) (ICS 225) or Equivalent(s) Covering Each of the Operational Periods.

(3) Memorandums from the Leadership of an Event or Incident Detailing the Tasks Performed by the Applicant and the Quality of the Performance.

(4) ICS 203 Organization Assignment List, ICS 204 Assignment List, or Equivalent.

(5) Example Products Such as Press Releases, Presentations and Emails.

(6) Incident Reports.

(7) After Action Reports (AARs).

(8) CAD Reports.

d. Certificates Showing Completion of Required Training.

e. Professional Resume.

f. Agreement to a national or state-wide Background Check Completed within 6 Months of HR packet Submission. Applicant may provide explanation of issues found on their record other than minor traffic violations.

Procedure B Illustration

Candidate B worked on an IMT in 8 separate events and incidents in West Virginia, in the past 5 years, as a Public Information Officer (PIO) before moving to Kentucky earlier in the year. Candidate B was the only PIO for each event and did not have the opportunity to work with a credentialed PIO in any of the instances. Candidate B pursued certification as a PIO in Kentucky based upon their experiences in West Virginia, so they put together a Procedure B submission in KQS.

HR Procedure C – “Hybrid”

Procedure C provides a middle option for persons seeking certification and credentialing through HR. Procedure C allows a person to combine Procedure A with Procedure B to address all of the tasks in a given PTB and to submit a complete packet. A person may not be able to find enough qualified persons to evaluate their prior work, on an IMT or EOC during an incident or event, to cover all of the tasks in a PTB. Procedure C allows the individual to combine portfolio and PTBs to effectively address all of the enumerated tasks of a position.

Procedure C Illustration

Candidate C served as a safety officer on an IMT in four, Type 3 incidents in the Commonwealth in the past 5 years. Candidate C was able to coordinate with two fellow IMT coworkers, credentialed as Safety Officers, to evaluate tasks. One evaluator served with Candidate C during one deployment, and the other served with Candidate C during another. Since the evaluated tasks from both evaluators do not address all of the tasks in the Safety Officer PTB, Candidate C follows Procedure B guidelines for the unaddressed tasks and submits a completed packet, also addressing the Safety Officer educational requirements that were already met.

Standard of Evaluation for All HR Packets

The QRBs maintain a standard of evaluation for all submitted HR packets. The standard is straightforward. Provided information for Competencies, Behaviors and Tasks must meet the standard of whether a reasonable person, familiar with Incident Management and Incident Command principles and priorities, would conclude based upon the documentation provided that the applicant had performed the Competency, Behavior, or Task to standard.

Coordinating Instructions for the Submission of an HR Packet

The preparation and submission of a HR packet requires careful consideration and definite steps. The below listing details the significant actions:

- a. A person seeking HR for a specific IMT position should first review the associated PTB. Taking into account their experiences and the position's Competencies, Behaviors and Tasks, the person should decide which Procedure works best to highlight their work, A, B, or C.
- b. After determining which procedure to use, the person next works on acquiring information that illustrates their competency in the specific tasks. This step differs with each procedure. For example, with Procedure A it involves a PTB, and with Procedure B the personal narrative is key, along with artifacts.
- c. The person applying for HR also should review the required training for their position and collect the certificates of their completed training. The next chart, also displayed in the PTB section, details the educational requirements. Note that a person may need to take an additional instruction before submission of the packet.

Position Class	IS 100	G 191	ICS 200	ICS 300	O 305	ICS 400	IS 700	IS 800	IS 2200	G 2300	PSTN Specific
Unit Leader IMT PSTN	X		X	X		X	X	X	X		X
CMD & GEN Staff IMT PSTN	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Unit Leader EOC Asst Team PSTN	X		X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
CMD & GEN Staff EOC Asst Team PSTN	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Notes:
For credentialing purposes, the person must successfully complete the position-specific training offered for the desired role. KQS recognizes equivalent training.

- d. A person applying for HR may be asked by the applicable QRB for an interview.
- e. The applicant should submit the completed packet to the KYEM Training Section at Training@ky-em.org. The Training Section will acknowledge receipt of the packet to the individual and provide the packet to the appropriate QRB.
- f. A person will receive updates about their packet's status.
- g. Importantly, all signatures on letters and forms must be "wet" or in other words handwritten on paper in ink. Letters and forms with "wet" signatures may be scanned and submitted to the Training Section.

AFTER INITIAL CERTIFICATION AND CREDENTIALING: RECERTIFICATION AND RE-CREDENTIALING

Personnel who received certification and credentialing via the submission of a PTB, through HR, or from reciprocity are eligible for recertification and re-credentialing. Not matter the route to certification and credentialing, **all certifications and credentials expire in 5 years**. The expiration date appears on the credential issued to the person, and it is also stated in the certification memorandum provided to the person from the Director of KYEM. If recertification and re-credentialing are desired, the person should submit a recertification packet before the expiration date, using the guidance contained in this section.

The process for recertification and re-credentialing is expedited, as outlined below:

a. Persons should submit an Incident Personnel Performance Rating (ICS 225), or Equivalent Form, covering each of two (or more) separate Operational Periods in an event or incident, as defined in the PTB Qualifying Events Chart. These documents provide sufficient information, if the evaluation was positive and therefore the person exhibited competency in the position. Persons should not submit derogatory ICS 225s as these documents will not promote recertification and re-credentialing.

b. Along with the two (or more) ICS 225s, the person submits the following additional items as part of a packet to the KYEM Training Section at Training@ky-em.org.

(1) Statement from the Person Stating Why They Seek Recertification and Re-credentialing.

(2) Photocopy of their current, KYEM-issued Credentialing Badge.

(3) The person may wish to provide additional information such as training taken since the initial certification and credentialing and letters of recommendation from IMT and/or EOC Assistance Team leadership.

(4) If the PTB for the position has been updated since the original certification and credentialing and new tasks added, the person must submit a PTB with the new tasks successfully performed during two, separate occasions as defined in the PTB Qualifying Events Chart. No other tasks on the PTB need to be specifically addressed.

c. The Training Section will acknowledge receipt of the packet to the individual and provide the packet to the appropriate QRB.

DECERTIFICATION / DE-CREDENTIALING

Work continues on this section of the KQS SOG. The Advisory Committee aims to publish the section as part of Version 2 of the SOG.

APPEALS

To address circumstances where an individual feels there is an error in the evaluation of his or her qualifications, or when he or she receives notice of an impending decertification, a person possesses the right to appeal in KQS.

There are two steps in the appeal process. First, the individual may present additional information to the QRB that assessed the individual. Second, if the individual is still not satisfied with the QRB's subsequent decision, the individual may then appeal to the Advisory Council as a final appeal. The individual may appeal in person and/or submit information in paper or electronic formats for the consideration of both entities.

The steps for appeals are as follows:

a. The individual notifies KYEM Training at Training@KY-EM.org of their intent to appeal within 60 days of the QRB's decision.

b. The State KQS Manager, or other person in the Training Section, acknowledges receipt of the notification.

c. The State KQS Manager adds the appeal to the next meeting agenda of the appropriate QRB, determines if the individual desires to appear in-person, and works with the individual to ensure the QRB sees all the appeal information the individual provides.

d. The QRB presents their findings to the Advisory Committee within 30 days of the meeting in which the appeal was heard.

e. In turn, the Advisory Committee has 30 days to present their concurrence/nonoccurrence to the AHJ. The same timeline of 30 days to present a recommendation to the AHJ applies when the Advisory Committee directly hears an appeal.

f. The process, including timelines, is the same for any subsequent appeal to the Advisory Committee.

RECIPROCITY

KQS allows for reciprocity in the credentialing of IMT and EOC Assistance Team personnel. This means someone, who is credentialed by another AHJ for a particular IMT or EOC Assistance Team position, may be credentialed in Kentucky without going through the PTB or HR processes. In other words, a person who is credentialed to serve in a particular IMT position in another state, by that state's AHJ, may apply for reciprocity in Kentucky. Reciprocity would enable the person to be credentialed in the Commonwealth for the very same position (or positions). As with PTBs and HR packets, QRBs process reciprocity packets.

KQS specifically recognizes the credentialing of fire service personnel in the Kentucky Division of Forestry for reciprocity.

The steps for a reciprocity packet are similar to other QRB submissions. The individual prepares and submits a reciprocity packet to KYEM Training at Training@KY-EM.org. The packet contains the following:

- a. Statement from the Person Stating Why They Seek Reciprocity.
- b. Copy of the credentialing artifact(s) from the AHJ. This could be a badge, letter, and/or even a certificate. Submit a copy of all credentialing artifacts.
- b. Point of Contact at the issuing AHJ for verification purposes.
- c. Additional items such as letter of recommendation from Kentucky IMT leadership.
- d. Agreement to a national or state-wide Background Check Completed within 6 Months of reciprocity packet submission
- f. KYEM Training Section acknowledges receipt of the packet and forwards the packet onward to the appropriate QRB for processing.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

This section defines the more frequently used or less well-known abbreviations and acronyms used in the SOG.

Abbreviation / Acronym	Definition
AHJ	Authority Having Jurisdiction
BCP	Basic Certification Packet
CAD	Computer-aided Dispatch
EMAC	Emergency Management Assistance Compact
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
ESF	Emergency Support Function
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
HR	Historical Recognition of Prior Learning and Experience
IAP	Incident Action Plan
ICS	Incident Command System
IMT	Incident Management Team
KRS	Kentucky Revised Statutes
KQS	Kentucky Qualification System
KYEM	Kentucky Emergency Management
NQS	National Qualification System
PTB	Position Task Book
QRB	Qualification Review Board
SEOC	State Emergency Operations Center
SME	Subject Matter Expert
SOG	Standard Operating Guide
STO	State Training Officer
TBP	To Be Published

DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

This section defines the more frequently used or less well-known terms used in the SOG.

AUTHORITY HAVING JURISDICTION (AHJ): The Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) is an organization, office, or individual having statutory responsibility for enforcing the requirements of a code, standard, or procedure, or for approving equipment, materials, an installation or procedure in a specific sector or area. Kentucky Emergency Management is the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) for the implementation and operation of KQS within the Commonwealth for its IMTs and EOC Assistance Teams.

COMMAND STAFF: The Command Staff is assigned to carry out staff functions needed to support the Incident Commander. These functions include interagency liaison, incident safety, and public information.

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTION: This is the grouping of governmental and certain private sector capabilities into an organizational structure to provide support, resources, program implementation, and services that are most likely needed to save lives, protect property and the environment, restore essential services and critical infrastructure, and help victims and communities return to normal during and following domestic events and incidents. Kentucky recognizes 17 ESFs in the SEOC such as Transportation and Energy.

EVALUATOR: An Evaluator is an individual that is responsible for evaluating a trainee's performance in an IMT or EOC Assistance Team position, using a Position Task Book (PTB). The Evaluator must already be certified in the trainee's position.

EVENT: An Event, wherever referred to in this documentation, is a planned occurrence and requires the use of the Incident Command System in managing resources. For purposes of KQS, the event must meet the same organizational and complexity requirements as for an "incident", i.e., be a Type 3 (or higher). Examples of events include large-scale parades, sporting events, festivals, conventions, and fairs.

GENERAL STAFF: The General Staff represents and is responsible for the functional aspects of the Incident Command structure. The General Staff typically consists of the Operations, Planning, Logistics, and Finance/Administration Sections.

INCIDENT: An Incident, wherever referred to in this document, is a unplanned occurrence and requires the use of the Incident Command System in managing resources. For purposes of KQS, the incident must meet the same organizational and complexity requirements as for an "event", i.e., be a Type 3 (or higher). Examples of incidents could include a tornado that damages a small section of a city, village or town; a railroad tank car HAZMAT leak requiring evacuation of a neighborhood or section of a community; a detonation of a large explosive device; and an active shooter.

INCIDENT ACTION PLAN (IAP): An IAP is a concise, coherent means of capturing and communicating overall incident priorities, objectives, strategies, tactics, and assignments in the context of both operational and support activities. The IAP should focus on addressing the needs of future timeframes (called operational periods).

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (ICS): The Incident Command System is a standardized, on-scene, all-hazards incident management approach that: (1) Allows for the integration of facilities, equipment, personnel, procedures, and communications operating within a common organizational structure. (2) Enables a coordinated response among various jurisdictions and functional agencies, both public and private. (3) Establishes common processes for planning and managing resources. Additionally, ICS is flexible and can be used for incidents of any type, scope, and complexity. ICS also allows its users to adopt an integrated organizational structure to match the complexities and demands of single or multiple incidents.

KENTUCKY QUALIFICATION SYSTEM (KQS): KQS represents the implementation and management of the National Qualification System, or NQS, in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Kentucky's implementation of NQS for the training and certification of Incident Management Teams (IMTs) and Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Assistance Teams is called the Kentucky Qualification System or KQS.

NATIONAL QUALIFICATION SYSTEM (NQS): NQS establishes and promotes baseline qualifications for a national incident workforce consisting of incident management, incident support, and emergency management personnel.

OPERATIONAL PERIOD: The period of time established for execution of a given set of operation actions as specified by the Incident Commander. Operational Periods can be of various lengths, although usually not more than 24 hours.

POSITION TASK BOOK (PTB): A PTB identifies the competencies, behaviors, and tasks that personnel demonstrate to become qualified for a defined incident management or EOC Assistance Team position. A trainee must meet these criteria, and educational requirements, to be certified and credentialed for a position within the KQS framework.

TRAINEE: An individual who is preparing to qualify for an ICS position by taking necessary instruction and for whom a position task book (PTB) has been initiated and an evaluator assigned.

TYPE 3 EVENT OR INCIDENT: A Type 3 Event or Incident involves a situation that requires more resources than the initial response can provide. However, it is not as complex or large as a Type 2 or 1 event or incident. A Type 3 incident may last for multiple operational periods and may need a written Incident Action Plan. A Type 3 incident is managed by an Incident Command organization or a Type 3 IMT. Command Staff positions are filled to reduce workload or span of control, and at least one General Staff position is filled to reduce workload or span of control.