**Simplified After Action Report & Improvement Plan Instructions**

Here are some tips to help you use this template to create an After Action Report for a real-world incident or event.

1. Choose the Right Mission Areas – The 5 mission areas are Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response and Recovery. For an event-related AAR, you will likely only cover Response and perhaps Recovery. Check [this FEMA site](https://www.fema.gov/mission-areas) for more details on what each mission area entails.
2. Use Strong Objectives – For an event-related AAR, you should include the objectives developed during the response process. If you created objectives as part of your incident command (ICS) process (in incident action plans (IAPs) or similar documents), evaluate your response based on how well you achieved them. If you did not write formal objectives, we suggest breaking your AAR into topic areas to categorize your strengths and weaknesses – i.e. Communications, Incident Command, Medical Surge Operations, Infection Control & Isolation, Supply Management, etc.
	1. Here are some sample objectives:
		* Implement staff screening process for COVID-19 symptoms.
		* Develop PPE decontamination procedures for N-95 masks.
		* Set up outside triage area for patients with COVID-like symptoms.
		* Conduct staff call-downs by (insert timeframe) for (insert purpose).
3. Write an Executive Summary that touches on all the important points of your response, including highlighting major strengths and significant areas for improvement. This portion of your AAR can be used as a stand-alone document and maybe useful for sharing your experiences or briefing leadership.
4. Highlight the Strengths - When looking back on a response, we tend to focus on the things that went wrong. However, make sure you also include the things that went right, so those can be repeated in future operations.
5. Analyze the Areas for Improvement – This template walks you through first identifying the area for improvement with an observation statement. Then, consider what plans, policies, procedures, etc. impact this area and might need review. Finally, perform a root cause analysis and dive into why the action occurred. (You may need to ask “why?” several times to get down to the root cause of the issue. Drilling down like this will allow you to address the root of your problem and hopefully apply a solution there.)
6. Identify Corrective Actions – While you will be tempted to put these in the text of the AAR, corrective actions for each area for improvement should be put in the improvement plan, Appendix A. This is also where you assign a responsible party and establish a timeline for the corrective action’s completion.
	1. Capability Element – Also a column in the Corrective Action Plan, this simply defines the type of action – Planning (such as a policy or procedure update), Organization (as in assigning new staff roles), Equipment, Training, or Exercise.

[Incident/Event Name]

After-Action Report/Improvement Plan

[Date]

# Overview

| **Event Name** | [Insert the name of event/response, which should match the name in the document header] |
| --- | --- |
| **Dates** | [Indicate the start and end dates of the event.] |
| **Scope** | This AAR covers the response to [event name] by [list entities covered] in [these geographic location(s)]. |
| **Mission Area(s)** | [Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and/or Recovery – For an event, it is most likely Response and/or Recovery only.] |
| **Objectives** | [List response objectives – These can be obtained from Incident Action Plans, if available. If no objectives were created, you can delete this line.] |
| **Threat or Hazard** | [List the threat or hazard (e.g. natural/hurricane, technological/radiological release, pandemic). You may add more details, too, such as “Pandemic – COVID-19.] |
| **Synopsis** | [Insert a brief summary of the event response.] |
| **Participating Organizations** | [List all participating organizations here.] |
| **Point of Contact** | [Insert the name, title, agency, address, phone number, and email address of the POC for the AAR] |

# Executive Summary

[On this page, insert your narrative summary of the response. Include start and end dates and a summary of your organization’s response, including an overview of strengths and areas for improvement identified. This may be used as a stand-alone document for leadership or partner briefings, etc.]

## [Objective 1]

### Strengths

Strength 1: [Observation statement]

Strength 2: [Observation statement]

Strength 3: [Observation statement]

### Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement:

Area for Improvement 1: [Observation statement. This should clearly state the problem or gap; it should not include a recommendation or corrective action, as those will be documented in the Improvement Plan.]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws that address this area for improvement, or will need to be updated to fix it.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of how this area for improvement impacted the objective/response.]

Area for Improvement 2: [Observation statement]

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws that address this area for improvement, or will need to be updated to fix it.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of how this area for improvement impacted the objective/response.]

## [Objective 2]

### Strengths

Strength 1: [Observation statement]

Strength 2: [Observation statement]

Strength 3: [Observation statement]

### Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement:

Area for Improvement 1: [Observation statement.

Reference: [List any relevant plans, policies, procedures, regulations, or laws that address this area for improvement, or will need to be updated to fix it.]

Analysis: [Provide a root cause analysis or summary of how this area for improvement impacted the objective/response.]

1. Improvement Plan

| Issue/Area for Improvement | Corrective Action | Capability Element[[1]](#footnote-1) | Primary Responsible Individual/Entity | Individual/Entity POC | Start Date | Completion Date |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. [Area for Improvement] | [Corrective Action 1]  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. [Area for Improvement] | [Corrective Action 2] |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. [Area for Improvement] | [Corrective Action 1] |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. [Area for Improvement] | [Corrective Action 2] |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. [Area for Improvement] | [Corrective Action 1]  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. [Area for Improvement] | [Corrective Action 2] |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. [Area for Improvement] | [Corrective Action 1] |  |  |  |  |  |

This IP has been developed specifically for [Organization] as a result of [Event Name] that occurred on [date(s) of event].

# Appendix B: Acronym List

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| **Acronym/Abbreviation** | **Definition** |
| AAR | After Action Report |
| HSEEP | Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program |
| IP | Improvement Plan |
| POC | Point of Contact |
| TBHMPC | Tampa Bay Health & Medical Preparedness Coalition |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

1. Capability Elements are: Planning, Organization, Equipment, Training, or Exercise. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)