

Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee By-Laws



Revised and adopted by REPAC on September 18, 2024
Approved by AACOG Board of Directors October 23, 2024

1.0 Authority

- 1.1** The Board of Directors of the Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG) has, through its Executive Director, established a Homeland Security (HLS) Division, which consists of an Advisory Committee - the Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee (REPAC) and AACOG HLS staff. REPAC is the advisory committee in the areas of Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security.
- 1.2** The REPAC By-laws are revised and amended herein to conform to the Policies and Regulations of the Alamo Area Council of Governments, the Texas Division of Emergency Management and with pertinent statutes.

2.0 Vision and Purpose

- 2.1** The purpose of the REPAC is to formulate strategies and recommendations to affect an approach to accomplish coordinated and integrated emergency preparedness planning so the best possible response to a disaster or incident may be achieved. With guidance from the AACOG Homeland Security Planning staff, the REPAC will establish and carry out grant administration procedures for the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) Grant. Annually, these duties include but are not limited to: recommending regional priorities, project review and prioritization, and project monitoring.

3.0 Advisory Committee Duties

- 3.1** In the performance of its functions, the Advisory Committee shall:
 - 3.1.1** Advise the AACOG Board of Directors on program and policy matters pertaining to the First Responder, Homeland Security or Emergency Preparedness areas.
 - 3.1.2** Serve as focal point and subject matter experts for leadership, guidance, coordination, development, and implementation of AACOG planning programs and activities in the Emergency Preparedness and Homeland Security areas.
 - 3.1.3** Develop, review and make recommendations to the AACOG Board of Directors on all required HLS or Emergency Management Plans, including the priorities for the purchase of equipment, training and communications. This will include any other issues related to Homeland Security or the Emergency Management system.
 - 3.1.4** Review and evaluate Homeland Security funding grant applications or funding changes and make funding recommendations to the Board of Directors for action.

- 3.1.5 Promote inter-governmental and interagency cooperation and coordination of resources among jurisdictions within the AACOG region.
- 3.1.6 Analyze the regional implication of the proposed project or program to ensure compliance with any State and Federal regulations, and to promote a regional standardization of equipment, training and policies.
- 3.1.7 Provide technical assistance to project sponsors or agencies in the preparation, development and implementation of programs in the First Responder, Homeland Security or Emergency Management areas.
- 3.1.8 Promote public awareness of Homeland Security or Emergency Management initiatives throughout the region.

4.0 Membership

- 4.1 The Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee (REPAC) shall be composed of members nominated to represent the areas specified in these Bylaws in the following manner:
 - 4.1.1 Three Bexar County representatives nominated by the county judge and approved by the REPAC, at least one of whom shall be a member of the County’s Office of Emergency Management.
 - 4.1.2 Three City of San Antonio representatives nominated by the mayor, or the mayor’s designee, and approved by the REPAC. One of whom shall be a member of the COSA Office of Emergency Management, one of whom shall be a member of the COSA Fire Department, and one of whom shall be a member of the COSA Police Department.
 - 4.1.3 One representative from each County, other than Bexar County, nominated by the respective county judge and approved by the REPAC.
 - 4.1.4 Representatives of member cities other than San Antonio as follows:
 - 4.1.4 a Three representatives for Cities situated in Bexar County.
 - 4.1.4 a.1 In the event of a vacancy, AACOG shall identify an eligible municipality and solicit a nomination from their mayor’s office. The REPAC shall vote on the nomination for approval.

4.1.4 b Nine representatives for Cities situated outside of Bexar County within the following counties: Atascosa, Bandera, Comal, Frio, Gillespie, Guadalupe, Karnes, Kendall, Kerr, Medina, Wilson, and McMullen.

4.1.4 b.1 In the event of a vacancy, AACOG shall identify an eligible municipality and solicit a nomination from their mayor’s office. The REPAC shall vote on the nomination for approval.

4.1.5 One representative from Southwest Texas Regional Advisory Council (STRAC) to represent regional medical response. AACOG will coordinate and disseminate a letter to the Executive Director of STRAC, requesting a nomination to the committee. The nomination will be presented to the REPAC for approval.

4.1.6 One representative from Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Region 8 to represent public health. AACOG will coordinate and disseminate a letter to the Director of DSHS requesting a nomination to the committee. The nomination will be presented to the REPAC for approval.

4.1.7 One representative from education, either k-12 or Higher Education, selected by the committee. AACOG will coordinate with the school districts, universities, and colleges that are members of AACOG to request a nomination to the committee. The nomination will be presented to the REPAC for a vote.

4.1.8 One representative from the Texas Division of Emergency Management. AACOG will coordinate and disseminate a letter to Director of the Texas Division of Emergency Management, requesting a nomination to the committee. The nomination will be presented to the REPAC for approval.

4.1.9 One representative from a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). AACOG will coordinate and disseminate a letter to the Chairs of the Local Emergency Planning Committees, requesting a nomination to the committee. The nominations will be presented to the REPAC for a vote. The representative with the highest number of tallied votes will be the designee.

4.1.10 One representative from the Bexar County Hospital District. AACOG will coordinate and disseminate a letter to the President of the Bexar County Hospital District, requesting a nomination to the committee. The nomination will be presented to the REPAC for a vote.

- 4.2 The REPAC shall consist of no more than 36 members, and all membership positions shall have voting privileges.
- 4.3 REPAC members shall serve at the discretion of their nominating official.
- 4.4 In the event of a vacancy, AACOG will coordinate and contact all appropriate entities and request nominations for the REPAC vote.

5.0 Officers and Election of Officers

- 5.1 The officers of this committee shall be a Chair and a Vice-Chair.
- 5.2 The officers shall be elected by the members of the Committee and shall serve for a period of two years. A member may not hold the same office for more than two successive terms.
- 5.3 Nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair will occur in October of the appropriate calendar year with the elections following in November. The terms of office shall begin the following January.

6.0 Duties of Officers

- 6.1 The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the committee and shall conduct the same according to Parliamentary Procedure providing that said rules are applicable and not inconsistent with these Bylaws.
- 6.2 The Chair shall perform all duties inherent to the office of Chair and such other duties as may be prescribed by the AACOG Board of Directors or REPAC.
- 6.3 The Chair may appoint a member to fill any vacancy in the office of Vice-Chair for the unexpired portion of the term or call for an election to fill such vacancy.
- 6.4 In the event of a vacancy in the office of Chair, the Vice-Chair shall succeed to and fill that office for the unexpired portion of the term, and a new Vice-Chair will be elected for the remainder of that term.
- 6.5 The Vice-Chair shall preside in the absence of the Chair, and when so acting, shall have all the powers of, and be subject to, all the restrictions upon the Chair.

7.0 REPAC Subcommittees

- 7.1 **Subcommittee Officers:**

- 7.1.1 The Chair and Vice-Chair of a subcommittee are not required to be members of the REPAC and shall be based on the required subject matter of each individual committee from the AACOG Region.
- 7.1.2 Nominations are made by the REPAC Chair based on recommendations from AACOG Homeland Security Staff and require a majority vote from the REPAC.
- 7.1.3 Subcommittee Officers will have no term limits.

7.2 Duties of Subcommittees:

- 7.2.1 The chair of each subcommittee is responsible for providing leadership for the subcommittee, and acts as a liaison, and presents the findings and recommendations of the sub-committee to regional decision-making bodies or offices.
- 7.2.2 The chair of each subcommittee shall run decision-making and voting processes of the sub-committee, determine the agenda of subcommittee meetings, and ensure outreach and communication with regional partners within that field of expertise.
 - 7.2.2 a A standardized State Homeland Security Program Project ranking process, set forth by AACOG Homeland Security Staff, will be utilized when subcommittees are ranking regional grant projects.
- 7.2.3 Each subcommittee shall work with AACOG Homeland Security staff and/or the REPAC to set the annual risk priorities and regular meetings for the region to address the concerns and responsibilities set within the Threat and Hazard Identification Risk Assessment (THIRA) and Stakeholders Preparedness Report (SPR) planning documents.
- 7.2.4 Each subcommittee shall assist AACOG Homeland Security staff with the pre-prioritization of SHSP projects and inform the REPAC Board of the sub-committee recommendation and/or concerns for projects recommended for funding.

8.0 Meetings

- 8.1 Meetings of the committee shall be held on a regular basis, usually once each month, on a day designated by AACOG staff, with the approval of the Chair, in the AACOG Boardroom, 2700 NE Loop 410, Suite 101, San Antonio, Bexar County, Texas.
- 8.2 Special meetings of the Committee may be convened at the direction of the Chair, at the time and place so directed.
- 8.3 Fifty percent (50%) plus one of members of the committee must be in attendance at a meeting to constitute a quorum.

- 8.4 Each Member or their alternate shall have one vote. A simple majority of those present and voting will be sufficient to decide any question before the Committee.
- 8.5 The use of proxy votes is disallowed in accordance with the AACOG Board of Directors bylaws and will not be accepted.
- 8.6 In the event of the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair, the senior staff member present may act as Chair Ex-officio, for the sole purpose of designating a member as Chair Pro-Tempore, and the member so designated shall have all the powers of the Chair for that particular meeting.
- 8.7 Any member who misses three or more regularly scheduled meetings in a 12-month period without a duly recognized alternate in attendance may be considered by the Chair as having resigned and the vacancy filled in the normal manner.
 - 8.7.1 Membership will be reviewed by AACOG staff during the month of June each year. Nominations for new members will be accepted and voted on quarterly. This is done in order to allow for vacant seats to be appropriately filled in the manner previously discussed in section 4.0 Membership.
- 8.8 All meetings will be open to the public with agendas posted in accordance with Federal and State Law, pertaining to open meetings.
- 8.9 The Chair, with the assistance of the AACOG staff, shall prepare and distribute to all members the agenda for each meeting at least one week prior to the date thereof. Written requests to place items on the agenda should be submitted to the Chair and AACOG staff at least 10 business days prior to the next scheduled meeting.
- 8.10 The official minutes of the meetings shall be recorded and maintained by the Homeland Security staff of the Alamo Area Council of Governments. The approved minutes will be posted on the AACOG website and distributed to the members of the REPAC committee no later than two weeks after the meeting.

9.0 Application Review

- 9.1 **Regional and State Plans:** A proposed project must be aligned with Regional, State and Federal HLS Strategic Plans and Initiatives.
- 9.2 **Notification of Grant Application Deadlines:** Applications are due at the location, date and local time designated by AACOG. The official time of receipt will be determined by the email date and time.
 - 9.2.1 **Late Application Policy:** Late grant applications will not be accepted.

- 9.3 REPAC Review:** REPAC will use the review form provided by the Homeland Security staff to review, evaluate and rank each grant application. The rank given by REPAC will be used to determine each grant application’s placement. The review, evaluation and ranking must take into account the priorities set forth in the relevant First Responder Strategic Plan or any other Homeland Defenses Strategy disseminated by the State or Federal governments.
- 9.4 Requesting Additional Information:** REPAC and/or the Homeland Security staff reserve(s) the right to request additional information to clarify the grant application, forms or attachments. Failure to comply with this request may result in the application not being recommended for funding.
- 9.5 Conflict of Interest:** The REPAC and/or the COG staff must abstain from reviewing, voting, commenting, or taking any action on any grant application, other than a grant application submitted by a COG, during the prioritization process if the member or an individual related to the member within the third degree by consanguinity or within the second degree by affinity:

Is employed by the applicant agency and works for the unit or division that would administer the grant, if awarded;

Serves on any board that oversees the unit or division that would administer the grant, if awarded;

Owns or controls any interest in, or is employed by, a business entity or other non-governmental organization that benefits, directly or indirectly, from activities with the applicant agency;

Receives any funds from the applicant agency as a result of the grant, if awarded;

Or

Uses or receives a substantial amount of tangible goods, services, or funds from the applicant agency.

For purposes of this section, “agency”, when applied to Municipalities or Counties, shall mean any division of said Municipality or County, and “unit or division” shall be a smaller component of that division.

- 9.6 Tabulation and Ranking:** The Homeland Security staff will establish the rank order rendered by the REPAC and report the priority ranking for the grant applications. Planning staff will dismiss the highest and lowest rank number submitted by REPAC members in formulating the REPAC average rank order to further address areas of conflict.

- 9.6.1 Notification of Priority Ranking:** The Homeland Security Staff shall provide notification of rankings to all grant applicants.
- 9.7 Ineligible Proposed Projects:** Applications identified as ineligible for funding by the Homeland Security staff will be submitted and reported as ineligible to REPAC. Determination of ineligibility for funding will be based upon the Homeland Security Grants Division guidelines.
- 9.8 Reasonable Budget Expectation:** REPAC may recommend an amount less than the amount requested by the applicant due to the availability of funding or for any other reason that it deems necessary and appropriate within guidelines.
- 9.9 Determination of Project Recommendation:** REPAC has the latitude to determine which applications will be recommended for funding and which will not be recommended for funding.
- 9.10 Appeal Process:** The decision to deny an application for funding may be appealed to the Alamo Area Council of Governments Board of Directors.
- 9.11 Grant Funding:** REPAC may develop and adopt policies and procedures for funding recommendations and forward the policies and procedures to the AACOG Board of Directors for approval and adoption. The approved and adopted policies and procedures will be included in the AACOG Regional Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee Policies and Procedures Manual and will be distributed to all REPAC members and interested people.
- 9.12 Administrative Requirements:** REPAC will be notified of the available funds, if such information is available from the State Administrative Agency.
- 10 Amendments to the Bylaws:**
- 10.1** REPAC Bylaws will be reviewed every July.
- 10.2** The Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the Committee and approval by the Board of Directors.
- 10.3** Any proposed amendment must be submitted to the REPAC membership at least ten business days prior to the meeting at which they may be acted on.
- 10.4** An amendment to any one section of the Bylaws does not necessarily invalidate the remainder.
- 10.5** The AACOG Board of Directors must expressly approve these Bylaws, as well as any revision.