

SYSTEM ASSESSMENT AND VALIDATION FOR EMERGENCY RESPONDERS (SAVER)



Homeland
Security

Science and Technology



BACKGROUND

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) established the System Assessment and Validation for Emergency Responders (SAVER) Program to assist emergency responders making procurement decisions. Located within the Science and Technology Directorate (S&T) of DHS, the SAVER Program conducts objective assessments and validations on commercially available equipment and systems, and develops knowledge products that provide relevant equipment information to the emergency responder community. The SAVER Program mission includes:

- Conducting impartial, practitioner relevant, operationally oriented assessments and validations of emergency response equipment; and
- Providing information, in the form of knowledge products, that enables decision makers and responders to better select, procure, use, and maintain emergency response equipment.

SAVER Program knowledge products provide information on equipment that falls under the categories listed in the DHS Authorized Equipment List (AEL), focusing primarily on two main questions for the responder community: “What equipment is available?” and “How does it perform?” These knowledge products are shared nationally with the responder community, providing a life and cost saving asset to DHS, as well as to Federal, state, and local responders.

THEMES

In order to most efficiently utilize funding and resources, the SAVER Program focuses on seven major equipment test and evaluation areas. These areas are:

- Search and Rescue
- CBRNE Detection
- Decontamination
- Explosive Countermeasures
- Information Technology
- Personal Protective Equipment
- Surveillance

TECHNICAL AGENTS

The SAVER Program is supported by a network of Technical Agents who perform assessment and validation activities. The current Technical Agents are:

- National Urban Security Technology Laboratory (NUSTL)
- Nevada National Security Site (NNSS) operated by National Security Technologies, LLC, for the Department of Energy
- Space and Naval Warfare Systems Center (SPAWARSYSCEN) Atlantic
- U.S. Army Natick Soldier Research Development and Engineering Center (NSRDEC).

SAVER REPORTS

The Technical Agents produce several different types of documents. Below is a brief summary of each type of document:

Application Note

An application note contains information and recommendations on the operational usage or employment of a specific technology.

Assessment Report

An assessment report provides a comparative analysis of the tested equipment based on the focus group criteria. It typically reiterates the criteria established in the focus group, provides an overview of the tests conducted, and presents the results.

Assessment Summary

A summary is typically a four- to five-page document that summarizes the assessment report. It presents the criteria from the focus group, the most important results, a comparative chart, and conclusions.

Focus Group Report

A focus group report lists evaluation criteria recommended by a focus group that fall within the five SAVER categories—affordability, capability, deployability, maintainability, and usability—for the purposes of the equipment assessment. The report provides details that emergency responders believe are important to know when making an equipment acquisition or operational decision. A focus group report includes recommended scenarios, selection criteria, and participant demographics.

Handbook and Guides

A handbook is a reference document for the emergency responder community that summarizes a current technology and describes capabilities and considerations related to that technology. Operating principles and typical applications are also included. A guide has many features of a handbook, though there is a primary focus on outlining an exemplar selection or procurement and/or project management process for a technology.

Market Survey Report

A market survey report provides a snapshot of the current commercial marketplace for a particular type of equipment. It lists known manufacturers of the equipment, their contact information, and salient technical characteristics of the equipment, as provided by the manufacturer. For certain markets with a large number of manufacturers, a representative sample of the market may be appropriate. The information is gathered through Internet searches, sources sought and requests for information listed on the Federal Business Opportunities website, and other means.

Product List

A product list is a document derived from a market survey and is typically only produced for large surveys. It is a tabular document that provides succinct details about products such as the product name, manufacturer, contact information, and a brief description.

Project Highlight

A highlight is a one-page document providing an overview of a particular SAVER project. The highlight attempts to answer the following questions: What is the project? Who is conducting the project? Why is it important to the responder community? What SAVER reports will be produced?

TechNote

The TechNote is typically a high-level, two-page document that answers some basic questions about a technology area such as the following: What is it?, What is it used for?, How does it work?, Why is it important to the responder community?, Where can I find more information on this?, and Who is using this technology?

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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