

GC3 State Asset Vulnerability Assessment Working Group Mission and Action Steps

October 2021

Based on Executive Order 3, this Vulnerability Assessment Working Group has been assigned the following mission¹:

Establish a framework, in consultation with the state's Chief Data Officer, for which state agencies shall compile and maintain an inventory of vulnerable assets and operations in coordination with CIRCA's ongoing vulnerability assessment.

Although the mission is fairly narrow in its focus, once completed, the framework can be used to evaluate the vulnerability of assets and operations other than those owned or performed by state agencies, and will include a broad range of considerations to be taken into account when conducting such an assessment, such as the effects on vulnerable populations, historic or cultural implications, etc.

Definition of State Government Assets and Operations

The Working Group adopts the position that the Executive Order 3 is limited to *state government* operations and assets, not the geographic boundaries of the State of Connecticut.

Following from this clarification, the working group determined that “real property” with an insurable interest for the government of the State of Connecticut defines state assets. It is notable that real property generally refers to buildings and excludes state property that is not buildings (see attached definition).

The working group recommends that state agencies evaluate all uninsured property owned by the state as well for its vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. The insured assets definition includes a list of “excluded property” from the insured real property of the government of Connecticut. State agencies should evaluate the list in terms of whether any or all parts of the excluded property should be included in their vulnerability assessment.

State Government Assets and Operations that provide services to vulnerable populations should be prioritized in a vulnerability assessment

In keeping with Executive Order 3, state government assets and operations that provide services to vulnerable populations should be prioritized in a vulnerability assessment and for subsequent intervention.

¹ The GC3 working groups' reports produced in 2020 may also be utilized to inform the work of this working group, including Infrastructure and Land Use and Science & Technology.

Critical Facilities: State Government Vulnerability Assessment Should Include Evaluation of the Loss of Public and Private Utility Facilities Critical to Maintaining and Restoring Normal Services to the State Government

The vulnerability assessment should also include the state's assets and operations' vulnerability to the loss in operations of public and private utility facilities, considered "critical facilities" because they are vital to maintaining or restoring normal services to the state government. These facilities include, electric grid (generation and transmission), waste water treatment plants, drinking water utilities, and communications infrastructure. The working group does not think the state government vulnerability assessment is responsible for assessing the vulnerability of utilities to the impacts of climate change. This vulnerability assessment should be done by the utilities, but the state government should understand their vulnerability to the loss of service from a public or private utility. Understanding the state's vulnerability to loss of critical facilities can help prioritize investments in the resilience of those facilities.

What is meant by a framework and what is its purpose? This framework is intended to provide the structure for the review of state agencies' assets and operations, with the goal of enhancing planning and preparedness and minimizing the effects of any vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change.

This framework will include:

- A checklist for state agencies to use to identify assets and operations that are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which in turn may have a cascading effect on vulnerable populations, historic or cultural functions or properties, etc.

In effect, the checklist will identify two categories of vulnerabilities: The first is the vulnerability of the state agency's assets and operations to climate change. The second is the effect of those vulnerabilities on the populations they serve and on the historic and cultural resources that the agency's operations may affect.

- A recommended method for state agencies to compile and maintain an updated inventory of their vulnerable assets and operations.

How will the Group develop this framework? There are a number of steps to be taken by the Group in order to develop this framework. These steps include:

- *Create a checklist for Connecticut state agencies to utilize to determine the vulnerability of their assets and operations.*
 - Establish a small group to review and recommend modifications to the Massachusetts vulnerability assessment survey so that it can be used by Connecticut state agencies to assess their climate vulnerability.
 - Include CIRCA in the small group to identify how their vulnerability index could be utilized for this survey.
 - Ensure the modifications include the vulnerability of state agencies' assets and operations to climate change and the effect of those vulnerabilities on the populations they serve and on the historic and cultural resources that the agency's operations may affect.
 - **Small Group Membership**
 - John Truscinski – CIRCA
 - Scott Gaul – Data Officer
 - Kim Z. DEMHS (Chair)
 - Natasha Dolmon (OPM intern)
 - David Barkin w/ DAS Facilities Team
 - **Deliverables:** MA Survey Section II draft modifications: **September 2021**. Connecticut State Vulnerability Assessment Checklist: **December 2021**.

- *The Chief Data Officer will lead the identification of existing datasets to assist state agencies with completing the above checklist, including any inventories of state assets and operations.*
 - Review the state's natural hazard mitigation plan (SNHMP) and identify any datasets included there.
 - Identify any other existing datasets known to the Chief Data Officer that could assist with the checklist. The Data Officer may query the full working group for their knowledge of any existing datasets.
 - **Deliverables:** Report on state datasets currently available to state agencies to complete the checklist: **November 2021**.

- *Identify tools that state agencies may use to complete the above checklist.*
 - CIRCA reviews their tools and other existing climate assessment tools and identifies which tools will help complete the checklist.
 - **Deliverables:** Summary of existing tools to complete the checklist: **November 2021**.

- *Establish framework and make recommendations on how state agencies can complete inventory of state assets and operations.*
 - Compile the checklist and tools and datasets to assist and support state agencies in completing the checklist. Together these sections form the Framework.
 - Form a small group to identify resources that state agencies can utilize to undertake the vulnerability assessment checklist to inventory their vulnerable state assets and operations and/or how the checklist can assist state agencies with garnering resources to address vulnerable state assets and operations. For example, identifying federal funding opportunities or technical assistance aimed at states.
 - **Small Group Membership: TBD**
 - **Deliverables:** Compilation of checklist, tools and datasets and list of resources by **December 2021.**

Public Participation

- Circulating the survey October 2021

Working Group Meeting Schedule

- Next meeting after Thanksgiving