



March 18th, 2015

Ms. Linda Crerar, Director
Center of Excellence for Homeland Security/Emergency Management
9401 Farwest Drive SW
Lakewood, WA 98498

Dear Linda,

On March 2, 2015, a team from the colleges and State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) participated in a review of the Center of Excellence for Homeland Security/Emergency Management (Center). Evaluators were: Tod Treat, Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs, Tacoma Community College; John Lederer, Executive Dean, Career and Workforce Education, North Seattle College; Ryan Davis, Dean of Business and Applied Technology, Everett Community College; Nancy Dick, Director of Workforce Education, SBCTC; Kendra Hodgson, Policy Associate, SBCTC; and Katherine Mahoney, Program Administrator, SBCTC. This letter serves as the review team's final report for the Center for fiscal year 2015.

In preparation for the meeting, the team read through the FY15 work plan (including quarterly updates) and the core expectations for all Centers, as well as reviewed the guidance provided to all Center directors identifying key questions to address during their presentations. In addition to listening to your presentation, the review team met with members of the advisory board, Center staff, as well as host college administration for further conversations.

The review team had several commendations, including:

- You are clearly well-respected by the advisory board. They repeatedly reflected on your depth of knowledge and commitment to the homeland security/emergency management (HSEM) field.
- Recent additions to the advisory board's composition demonstrate a focus on rounding out perspectives guiding the Center's work. The review team especially appreciated the small-business focus.
- It is evident that there is a lot of activity and effort from you and your staff.
- The Center has leveraged the HSEM degree at Pierce College to help support a collaborative model in providing the HSEM courses to other colleges.

There were also recommendations made by the review team.

Throughout the review, the team sought to learn how the Center is helping the CTC system align curricula with the HSEM field, while also helping industry understand how their workforce needs could

be met by the CTC system. The review team especially wanted to learn what role the Center plays in aiding the CTC system in preparing new or incumbent workers for employment in the Center's industry sector. This was not clearly or fully addressed through the conversations in the review. For example, there was little focus on CTC programs preparing students for entry level positions in the field. Every advisory board member started their career as a first responder (or military) and moved up in the field. The LMI data presented identified the entry level jobs as being on the "Bright Outlook" list (e.g. Ambulance Drivers, EMT/Paramedics, Police Patrol Officers), but no information provided on how the COE is supporting pathways to these occupations.

It was clear from the review that HSEM skills are required across sectors. The Center needs to be able to articulate where the CTC system has a role in preparing workers for careers using HSEM skills. To address this, it is recommended that the Center create a career lattice illustrating the different options for employment in the field of HSEM, and other fields of study that include HSEM knowledge and skills. From that, the Center should work to identify where the CTC system is best positioned to meet workforce demands, and to strategically focus Center resources to build the capacity of the CTC system to do so. This may not necessarily be full degree programs; it could include courses or course modules which could be imbedded in existing programs or lead to a certificate (including corporate/continuing education courses).

Other recommendations include:

- Continue to delineate the difference between the work of the Center from Pierce College's HSEM degree program. A more transparent explanation of how collaborating colleges' registration and tuition are addressed can help alleviate concerns that the CoE is being used to generate enrollments for Pierce's program as opposed to expanding statewide HSEM instructional capacity.
- Continue to broaden the advisory board expertise. Which areas need more representation may be highlighted through the career lattice work.
- Engage more deeply in exploration of labor market information to help define career lattice and to help assess if the efforts expended by the Center are in areas with highest return.

The review team thanks you, your staff, your host college and especially your advisory board members who took time from their busy schedules to participate in the review. We learned a great deal and will continue to monitor the progress of the Center.

Sincerely,



Nancy Dick
Director, Workforce Education