

PS-Prep Is It Relevant?

Special Report & Survey Results

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DomPrep Survey

PS-Prep – Is It Relevant?

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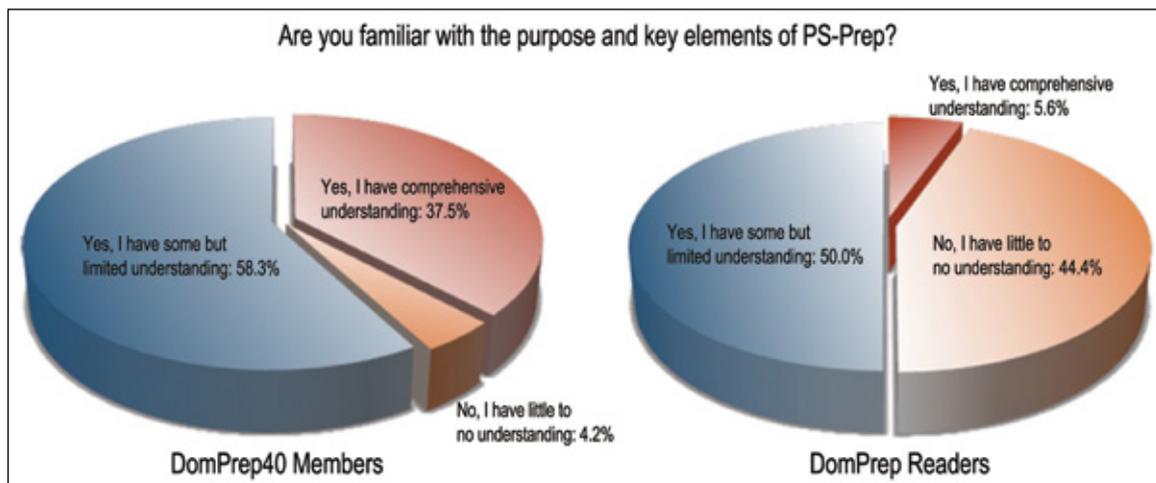
Public Law 110-53 includes a provision (Title IX, PS-Prep) for the development of a voluntary disaster preparedness certification process for private sector entities. This voluntary certification and accreditation program is being developed and managed by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). One of the key elements of the program is the enhancement of the private sector's preparedness, readiness, and resilience to natural and manmade disasters. DHS has been leading efforts toward implementation of PS-Prep, including the development and administration of an accreditation and certification program, as well as other related standards.

To find out how familiar the preparedness, response, and recovery communities are with the PS-Prep certification process, DomPrep recently conducted a qualitative survey. The survey was conducted in September 2010, after which the responses of the DomPrep Journal readers were compared to those of the DP40 members. The majority of DP40 members and DomPrep Journal readers who responded to the survey hold upper or middle management positions within their organizations. Although many readers clicked to view the survey page, very few actually responded to the survey. This could be an indication that some readers were only peripherally interested or aware of the PS-Prep Program. The results also suggest that these readers do not yet have the understanding necessary to successfully implement the PS-Prep Program.

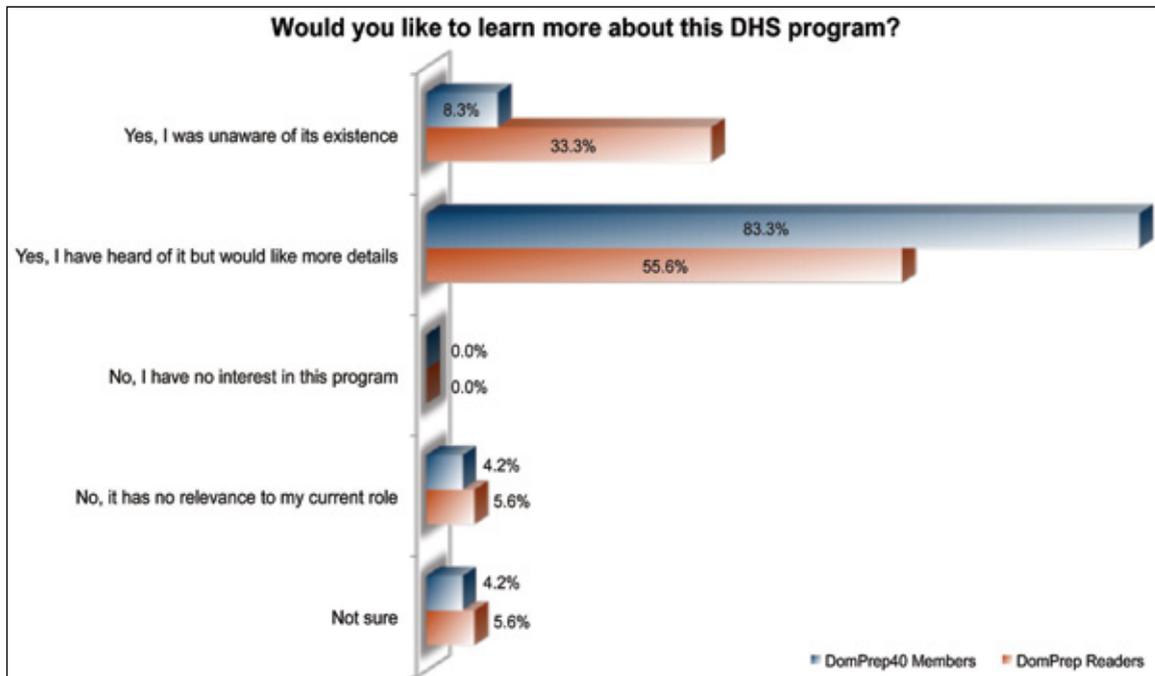
Key Findings: Most DomPrep Journal readers who responded are not as well versed about PS-Prep as they would like to be. Most DP40 members and readers who responded do support one or more elements of the program, though many indicated that certain elements need to be reviewed and perhaps modified.

Survey Results

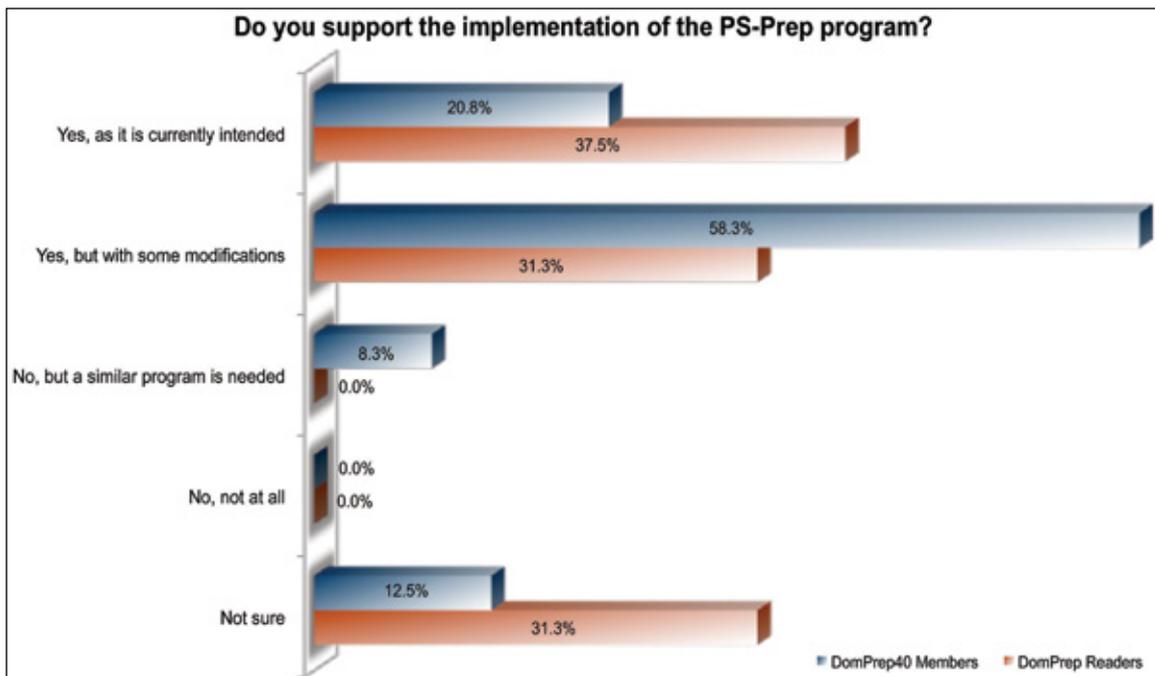
First, it was important to gain an understanding of members' and readers' awareness level of PS-Prep. While 96 percent of DP40 members had at least some understanding of the program, less than 56 percent of readers could say the same.



However, roughly 90 percent of both groups would like to know more about the program. These findings, though limited, perhaps indicate that more outreach and communication is needed for a wider cross-section of DHS’s stakeholders in both the public and private sectors.



When asked about their level of support for the PS-Prep Program, 80 percent of DP40 members, compared to 68 percent of readers, support the program as is or with some modifications. While no respondents lack support of the program in its entirety, more than a third of readers were unsure if they should support it.



The table on the next page represents the responses of the DP40 members and the DomPrep readers to two questions about specific elements that they either support or do not support. At least some respondents supported the implementation of each element of the PS-Prep Program

that was listed. Of both groups of respondents, the elements that have the greatest support are the voluntary nature as well as the accreditation and certification program. Of the elements that raised the greatest concerns, about a quarter of each group does not support the monitoring of the program. This may suggest that there is insufficient awareness as to how the program will be monitored and what the potential “compliance” requirements and remedies will be once PS-Prep is fully operational.

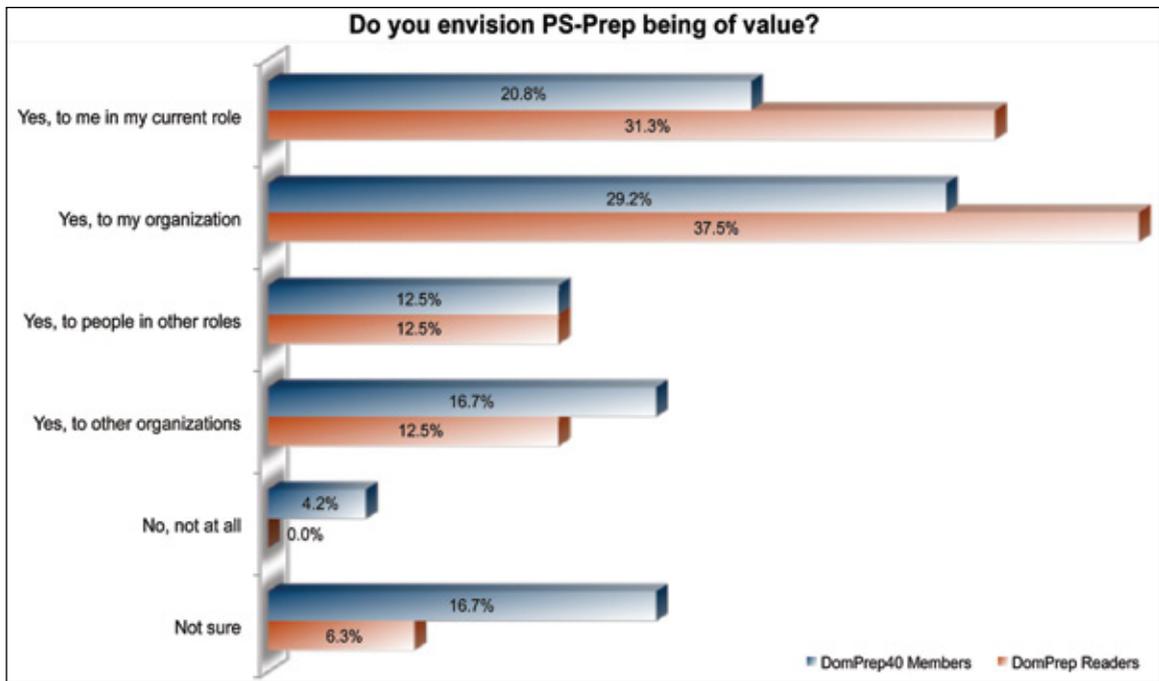
What elements of the PS-Prep Program & its implementation do you	Support		Do Not Support	
	DomPrep40 Members	DomPrep Readers	DomPrep40 Members	DomPrep Readers
That it is voluntary	75.0%	75.0%	27.3%	21.4%
The three preparedness standards chosen	50.0%	50.0%	13.6%	14.3%
The small business considerations	54.2%	43.8%	13.6%	0.0%
The certification process	41.7%	56.3%	27.3%	21.4%
The monitoring of the program	54.2%	31.3%	27.3%	21.4%
The accreditation and certification program	58.3%	75.0%	31.8%	14.3%
None of the above	0.0%	6.3%	27.3%	57.1%

Almost 70 percent of readers who responded indicated that they envision the program as being valuable either to themselves or to others within their organizations, whereas only 50 percent of DP40 members responded similarly. However, both groups similarly believe that the program has value to others outside of their organizations. This finding suggests that, even with the limited knowledge about the program itself, there is some consensus and support regarding the intent and potential value of such a program.

The table below represents the responses to a series of questions. When asked whether there are elements of the program that should be eliminated, roughly 60 percent of both groups indicated that they were “not sure” at this time. This may again be indicative of the limited knowledge that many of the respondents reported about this program. Furthermore, when asked about whether the perceived benefits of the program for an organization would extend to their stakeholders – e.g., clients, insurance carriers – close to 60 percent of all respondents in both groups indicated that they would.

An interesting observation emerges when looking at the responses to the question regarding whether NOT having PS-Prep Certification or Accreditation could be a strategic disadvantage to an organization. About 31 percent of readers and 48 percent of DP40 members were not sure. These findings may suggest that there are some uncertainties about the competitive drivers or incentives required to successfully implement a voluntary program, especially given the current lack of understanding of the potential costs an organization may incur while implementing the program.

One respondent stated, “I think that in the future, non-certification could have an impact on bidding procedures, etc., for companies doing business with federal and state government.” Another respondent added that “[t]here are many positive incentives that can be promoted within the voluntary framework – carrot instead of stick. Recognition, moral appeal, positive peer pressure, and negative peer pressure (i.e.,



black lists) [may be] needed in later phases of implementation where life safety issues are involved. This approach has worked well in voluntary seismic mitigation approaches.”

Observations from this latest survey indicate that the majority of the respondents lack a comprehensive understanding of the PS-Prep Program, but most want to learn more. They are divided about the advantages and disadvantages of certification for participating organizations as well as how the program or certification will affect them or their organizations. Among the concerns raised by respondents were questions related to incentives for compliance, the risks posed by non-compliance, and the cost to businesses. Finally, there are also some remaining questions about how such a voluntary program will be leveraged to maximize its intent and value.

Based on the results and observations of this survey, a key recommendation is that increased public awareness and understanding is needed. DHS and other stakeholders should consider expanding and accelerating outreach efforts and guidance regarding PS-Prep. A major component of this outreach effort should clearly articulate the long-term benefits PS-Prep can provide to public and private sector organizations and the nation as a whole.

	Yes		No		Not Sure	
	DomPrep40 Members	DomPrep Readers	DomPrep40 Members	DomPrep Readers	DomPrep40 Members	DomPrep Readers
Are there elements of the PS-Prep Program that you wish to see eliminated, changed, or added?	20.8%	17.6%	12.5%	23.5%	66.7%	58.8%
Do you believe that an organization could realize benefits from its clients, customers, partners, insurance carriers, or similar stakeholders if it is designated as being "PS-Prep certified"?	56.5%	62.5%	8.7%	6.3%	34.8%	31.3%
Do you believe that not being PS-Prep certified could give an organization a competitive disadvantage?	20.8%	43.8%	29.2%	25.0%	50.0%	31.3%

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(CT) Fire Department



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