



INSTITUTE FOR DEFENSE ANALYSES

2024 State Programs Annual Report

Juliana Esposito
Dina Eliezer
Emily A. Fedele
Zoe L. Pamonag
Ashlie M. Williams

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For More Information

Ashlie M. Williams, Project Leader
awilliam@ida.org, (703) 845-2268

Jessica L. Stewart, Director, Strategy, Forces and Resources Division
jstewart@ida.org, (703) 575-4530

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730 East Glebe Road, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3086 • (703) 845-2000

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State Programs Annual Report

National Guard Bureau
Warrior Resilience and Fitness

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Executive Summary

The National Guard Bureau (NGB) Manpower and Personnel Directorate's (J1) Warrior Resilience and Fitness (WRF) division conducts a State Programs Process to support the prevention of harmful behaviors through identifying and evaluating state best practices and expanding them across the National Guard (NG) States, Territories, and District of Columbia (S/T/DC). Since 2019, WRF has tasked the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) with facilitating their State Programs Process.

This report summarizes WRF's State Programs Process and the technical assistance IDA provides to WRF and the selected state programs. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the State Programs Process and its five key areas. Chapter 2 details the first three areas of the State Programs Process related to WRF's identification and selection of *new* state programs. This stage of the process includes releasing the call for proposals, initial review of the submissions, review panels of subject matter experts to evaluate the submissions, and the WRF leadership programmatic review to make final state program selections. Throughout these areas of the State Program Process, IDA develops technical assistance materials for WRF and S/T/DC applicants to facilitate the identification, review, and selection of activities. These include submission materials for applicants, a packet of materials for panelists to use during submission review, a facilitator guide for the review panels, and the Review Process Outputs packet with the reviewer evaluations of the WRF submissions. Table ES-2 lists these materials.

Chapter 3 explains the final areas of the State Programs Process, covering the technical assistance and activities that WRF and IDA provide in support of the *selected* state programs' evaluation, dissemination, and implementation. Since 2019, IDA has worked with selected state programs to assist their program evaluations and implementation. For Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24), IDA provided technical assistance to WRF's four active state programs. Table ES-1 provides a brief description of each program. This assistance aimed to support each program's unique evaluation and implementation needs; outputs of this assistance included conceptual frameworks, logic models, written evaluation plans, fidelity checklists, pre-post participants surveys, and data analysis and interpretation. Table ES-2 provides an overview of the key technical assistance materials IDA developed for each state program. Lastly, this chapter also details the products IDA developed to facilitate dissemination of the WRF state programs to their local NG leadership, to NGB leadership, and to wider prevention, research, and program evaluation communities. These products largely contain one-pagers and information

packets included in this and prior annual reports. See Table ES-2 for key dissemination products updated based on the state program’s progress over FY24. In Chapter 4, IDA outlines challenges and proposed recommendations in all stages of the State Programs Process.

Table ES-1. Overview of Fiscal Year 2024 Programs

Program	Description
CALM & Collect	Online training for gatekeepers and leaders to help Service Members at risk of suicide reduce access to lethal means by using on-base firearm storage locations. Participants indicated statistically significant improvements in most suicide- and lethal means-related short-term outcomes (e.g., beliefs about lethal means safety, awareness of safe storage resources, attitudes toward individuals with a history of suicidal behavior, and confidence in supporting individuals experiencing heightened risk).
Firearms Sentinel	In-person firearms class with suicide prevention content to spread awareness of mental health risk factors and increase use of safe storage practices. Preliminary evaluation findings show promising improvements in short-term outcomes from pre- to post- training (e.g., familiarity with safe storage options, perceived importance of considering lethal means safety-related factors when storing a firearm, and intentions to take a “tactical pause” before accessing a firearm).
Mental Health First Aid	In-person gatekeeper training program to enhance prevention and intervention skills for behavioral health concerns, including psychological distress, substance misuse, and suicide. Evaluation findings show that participants have significantly increased their confidence in gatekeeper training skills and their ability to listen to someone in distress.
Work for Warriors	Screening and referral to NG resources for Service Members, veterans, and spouses through an online platform. In 2024, 51% of referrals were to Family Programs, 27% were to Tricare or Veterans Affairs services, and 14% were to employment/financial resources. On average, direct connection with a service provider occurred within 3 days of screening.

Table ES-2. Supplemental Materials

Intended Recipients	State Programs Process Area	Supporting Materials
WRF	Assess Needs and Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission materials (Supplement 1) • Review Panel Panelist materials (Supplement 2)
	Invite Submissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Panel Facilitator materials (Supplement 3)
	Select Programs to Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Panel Output materials (Supplement 4)
Current State Programs	Evaluate Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Programs Orientation materials (Supplement 5) • WRF Evaluation Primer and Catalogue of Metrics (separate publication) • Implementing a Robust Evaluation Design (Supplement 6)
Prevention Personnel and Leaders	Disseminate and Implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CALM & Collect materials (Supplement 7) • Firearm Sentinel materials (Supplement 8) • Mental Health First Aid materials (Supplement 9) • Work for Warriors materials (Supplement 10) • State Programs Annual Report: FY2022 (separate publication) • State Programs Annual Report: FY2023 (separate publication) • Considerations for the Scale-up of Prevention Programs in the National Guard (separate publication)

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1. Introduction

A. Background

Since 2019, the National Guard Bureau (NGB) Manpower and Personnel Directorate's (J1) Warrior Resilience and Fitness (WRF) division has provided targeted financial and technical assistance to National Guard (NG) states and territories in support of novel efforts to prevent and respond to harmful behavior. WRF refers to these efforts as “state programs” and to its support to them as the “WRF State Programs Process.” By design, WRF’s support to state programs is time-limited (typically one to three years) and serves dual aims: 1) the identification of state programs that demonstrate implementation and outcome effectiveness, and 2) the derivation of lessons learned and best practices from implementation and evaluation efforts—successful and unsuccessful—conducted at the local level. WRF intends to disseminate documentation regarding both purposes to appropriate audiences to strengthen prevention and response across the NG.¹ In addition, WRF may establish long-term funding and centralized management (within NGB-J1) of promising programs identified as appropriate for implementation on a larger scale.

Ultimately, these efforts align with current Department of Defense (DoD) policy priorities. Department of Defense Instruction (DoDI) 6400.09² and DoDI 6400.11³ establish requirements and processes for the local-level identification, implementation, and evaluation of data-informed or research-based prevention activities that address risk and protective factors for harmful behaviors (e.g., domestic violence, harassment, sexual assault, suicide). As described in the DoD’s prevention strategy, the Prevention Plan of Action (PPOA) 2.0,⁴ continuous and long-term evaluation of prevention activities

¹ Juliana Esposito, Dina Eliezer, Emily A. Fedele, Zoe Pamonag, and Ashlie M. Williams, *State Programs Annual Report: National Guard Bureau Warrior Resilience and Fitness*, IDA Document NS D-33216 (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, 2024).

Ashlie M. Williams, Dina Eliezer, Juliana Esposito, and Emily A. Fedele, *State Programs Annual Report: National Guard Bureau Warrior Resilience and Fitness*, IDA Document NS D-33216 (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, 2023).

² Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, *DoD Instruction 6400.09. DoD Policy on Integrated Primary Prevention of Self-Directed Harm and Prohibited Abuse or Harm* (Department of Defense, September 2020).

³ Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, *DoD Instruction 6400.11. DoD Integrated Primary Prevention Policy for Prevention Workforce and Leaders* (Department of Defense, April 2023).

⁴ Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, *Prevention Plan of Action 2.0 2022–2024* (Department of Defense, May 2022).

(especially *new activities* before they are disseminated more widely, and *untested* activities already in use) enables decision-makers to improve resource efficiency, Service Member readiness, and ultimately, mission effectiveness. WRF’s State Programs Process aims to advance these purposes across the 54 NG states and territories and the District of Columbia (DC).

B. IDA Task

WRF tasked the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) with facilitating its “State Programs Process.”⁵ IDA approaches this task by advising the sponsor and providing technical assistance in five areas:

1. **Assess Needs and Gaps:** IDA reviews current and previously-supported state programs, DoD policy guidance, and external research documents to develop priority topic areas and programmatic approaches for WRF’s consideration.
2. **Invite Submissions:** WRF releases a call for proposals for state programs, with support from senior NGB-J1 leadership. Stakeholders in all NG states and territories and DC are eligible to submit a proposal.
3. **Select Programs to Fund:** IDA compiles proposal submissions, reviews the academic literature to summarize the research-base supporting each proposal, and facilitates review panels, which assess each proposal against established criteria. WRF recommends final proposal selections to NGB-J1 leadership.
4. **Evaluate Effectiveness:** IDA assists each state program with developing a plan and tools to evaluate their activities and analyzing state-/territory-collected data.
5. **Disseminate and Implement:** IDA synthesizes information documented in written state program reports. WRF disseminates this information and/or identifies appropriate actions (e.g., reduced or increased financial and management assistance).

⁵ The steps of this process, originally referred to as the “Warrior Resilience and Fitness Innovation Incubator,” are detailed in a previous IDA report. See Dina Eliezer, Ashlie M. Williams, Dave I. Cotting, Heidi C. Reutter, and Rachel D. Dubin, *National Guard Suicide Prevention and Resilience Innovation Framework*, IDA Paper P-22668 (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, July 2021).

C. About This Report

This Annual Report summarizes the activities of the State Programs Process and progress of individual state programs during the 2024 programmatic cycle.⁶ Chapter 2 describes activities that support the identification and selection of new programs, most of which fall under the first three areas of the State Programs Process: Assess Needs and Gaps, Invite Submissions, and Select Programs to Fund. Chapter 3 of the report outlines activities in the final two areas of the State Programs Process, which focus on supporting WRF-selected state programs: Evaluate Effectiveness and Disseminate and Implement, with attention to four programs active in 2024. Supporting products are provided separately as supplements; see Appendix A for information about how to extract those files. To facilitate WRF's intent to disseminate information about the State Programs Process and individual state programs, as appropriate, IDA designed Chapters 2 and 3 of this report and each attachment to be used together or as stand-alone documents. Table 1 provides an overview of these chapters' contents and supplemental materials, which can be extracted by following the steps outlined in Appendix A. In Chapter 4, IDA recommends areas for improvement for the State Programs Process, for the sponsor's consideration during the 2025 and 2026 programmatic cycles.

⁶ The activities of the State Programs Process do not align with the fiscal year or calendar year. The programmatic cycle commences with the receipt of annual funding following passage of the National Defense Authorization Act. Programs that received support in the previous programmatic cycle may continue activities to the extent possible in the interim time period.

Table 1. Overview of Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 Contents and Supplemental Materials

Chapter	State Programs Process Area	Supplemental Materials
Chapter 2	Assess Needs and Gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submission materials (Supplement 1)
	Invite Submissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Panel panelist materials (Supplement 2)
	Select Programs to Fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Panel facilitator materials (Supplement 3)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Panel outputs (Supplement 4)
Chapter 3	Evaluate Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• State Programs Orientation Materials (Supplement 5)
	Disseminate and Implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• WRF Evaluation Primer and Catalogue of Metrics (separate publication)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Implementing a Robust Evaluation Design (Supplement 6)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Considerations for the Scale-up of Prevention Programs in the National Guard (separate publication)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CALM & Collect materials (Supplement 7)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Firearm Sentinel materials (Supplement 8)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mental Health First Aid materials (Supplement 9)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work for Warriors materials (Supplement 10)

2. Assess Gaps, Invite Submissions, and Select Programs

A. Introduction

In support of preventing harmful behaviors in the Air and Army NG and developing a portfolio of effective prevention activities to disseminate across the 54 NG states, territories, and District of Columbia (S/T/DC), the NGB WRF Division conducts an annual process to identify and select promising practices. WRF then provides funding and technical assistance to selected programs, before considering them for expansion across the 54 S/T/DC.

IDA actively assists WRF in the annual identification and selection of programs. This chapter updates content from *National Guard Suicide Prevention and Resilience Innovation Framework*⁷ to describe WRF's current activities related to the identification and selection of new state programs under the Assess Gaps, Invite Submissions, and Select Programs areas of the State Programs Process. Section 2.B.1 details the initial steps of the process, including the call for proposals, the submission documents, and initial IDA review of the submissions. In Section 2.B.2, we describe the formal evaluation and discussion of proposals that IDA facilitates. Section 2.B.3 outlines the programmatic review, led by WRF, which yields final funding selections.

B. Process Overview

IDA's 2019 report⁸ recommended a process for the selection of innovative local pilot programs and best practices to prevent high risk behavior and promote resilience. Over the next several years, IDA worked with WRF to implement and refine the process annually. The selection process has evolved considerably to yield higher-quality portfolios of proposals and continue to align with WRF's priorities. This document describes the current iteration of the process for soliciting, reviewing, and selecting proposals, exemplified by the Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) process.

⁷ Dina Eliezer, Ashlie Williams, Dave Cotting, Heidi Reutter, and Rachel Dubin, *National Guard Suicide Prevention and Resilience Innovation Framework*, IDA Paper P-22668 (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, July 2021).

⁸ Dina Eliezer, David R. Graham, and Susan Clark-Sestak, *National Guard Suicide Prevention Innovation Framework*, IDA Paper P-10468 (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, March 2019).

The WRF submission and selection process spans approximately eight months, depending on the timing of the Congressional funding cycle (Figure 1). First, WRF disseminates a call for proposals to the 54 S/T/DC and provides an eight-week period for receipt of all proposal documents. After the close of the submission window, WRF convenes Review Panels (RP), facilitated by IDA, to assess proposals according to established evaluation criteria (described in Table 5). WRF leadership then engages in programmatic review, assembling the portfolio of proposals that best aligns with WRF priorities and can be feasibly implemented with the funding available. IDA originally modeled the selection process after the Military Operational Medicine Research Program (MOMRP)⁹ and the National Institutes of Health's (NIH)¹⁰ processes for peer review and refined it based on feedback from Review Panel participants and other experts.

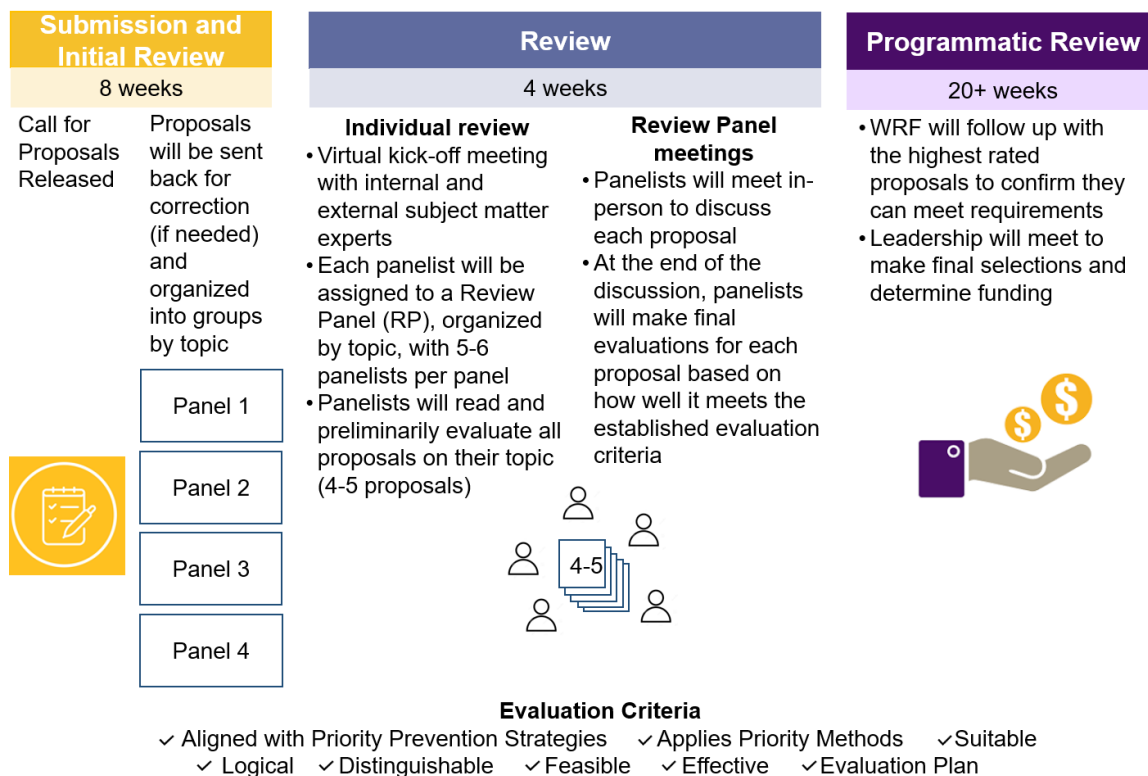


Figure 1. WRF Submission and Selection Process Overview

⁹ Dina Eliezer, David R. Graham, and Susan Clark-Sestak, *National Guard Suicide Prevention Innovation Framework*, IDA Paper P-10468 (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, March 2019).

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, and 2019 Office of Extramural Research, *NIH Peer Review: Grants and Cooperative Agreements* (n.p.: National Institutes of Health, n.d.), <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/peerreview22713webv2.pdf>.

1. Assess Gaps and Invite Submissions

To begin the State Programs Process, IDA assists WRF in assessing gaps in their programmatic and partnership portfolio. These gaps shape WRF's priorities in the call for proposals, reviewer evaluations of the submission during the review panels, and ultimate selection decisions made during programmatic review.

a. Call for Proposals

WRF releases a call for proposals each year and specifies priority areas to encourage S/T/DC¹¹ to submit programs that best meet NGB's programmatic needs and reflect prevention and evaluation best practices.

WRF's priority areas vary annually based on current gaps and priorities; they typically include *prevention strategies*, *topics*, and/or *methods*.

- *Priority methods* refer to characteristics of the program design, such as format of the prevention activities or branch of implementation.
- *Prevention strategies* refer to the domains of the NG Prevention Framework.¹² To inform WRF's prioritization of these, IDA identifies strategies that are not extensively covered by WRF's existing portfolio. For example, creating protective environments by managing access to lethal means was a key programmatic gap for several years.
- *Priority topics* refer to Service Member behaviors and their contributing factors. For example, due to WRF's early focus on preventing suicide, promoting connectedness was one of the first priority topics included in the proposal solicitation. Beginning in FY22, IDA suggested prioritization of programs that target more than one harmful behavior.

Since the FY19 cycle, IDA has recommended *priority methods* to encourage use of evidence-based programs and robust evaluation methods; as such, these priority methods have remained fairly consistent over the years. In recent selection cycles, priority methods included multiple component or joint Army National Guard (ARNG)/Air National Guard (ANG) programs and programs that are currently present in multiple S/T/DCs and/or feasible for national implementation.

¹¹ WRF has received submissions from a variety of program offices (e.g., Chaplaincy; Family Readiness; Psychological Health; Resilience, Risk Reduction, and Suicide Prevention; Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention).

¹² National Guard Bureau, *Integrated Primary Prevention Guide*, 2024.
https://www.nationalguard.mil/Portals/31/Documents/J-1/WRF/Integrated%20Primary%20Prevention%20Guide_signed.pdf.

Priority strategies and topics have differed greatly over the years according to broader WRF programmatic activities and emerging needs. For example, mobile apps and virtual services were a priority during the COVID-19 pandemic, and integrated primary prevention of harmful behaviors emerged as a priority before and during the development of the IPP Workforce (IPPW) from FY22 to FY24. As of the FY25 cycle, WRF began explicitly instructing S/T/DC to also meet Integrated Primary Prevention (IPP) priorities, to support implementation of DoD’s prevention policies (DoDI 6400.09 and DoDI 6400.11). To further inform priority strategies and topics, IDA reviews the problems and gaps identified in recent submissions. Table 2 summarizes priority strategies and topics over the past selection cycles.

Table 2. WRF Priority Topics, Fiscal Years 2020–2025

FY20	FY21	FY22
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing barriers to care and resource utilization • Integrated approaches to destructive behavior • Promoting connectedness • Management of lethal means • Support during transitions/reintegration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of lethal means • Mobile apps and virtual services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of lethal means • Integrative approaches to prevent harmful behavior • Reintegration and/or postvention
FY23	FY24	FY25
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated primary prevention • Postvention • Reintegration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated primary prevention • Postvention • Reintegration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify people in need • Create protective environments • Promote help-seeking • Provide resources and support • Lessen secondary and future harm

Over the years, IDA and WRF worked together to improve the communication of priority areas. After the FY20 cycle, IDA recommended fewer priority topics, with greater specificity, to better differentiate between submissions. The topics in FY20 were so broad and wide-ranging that nearly all submissions fit under one of the areas. Similarly, proposal applicants struggled to understand the differences between the priority topics for FY23 and FY24, often submitting unrelated proposals. To further guide submissions, IDA recommended WRF prioritize more specific prevention strategies, as outlined in the Prevention Framework, for the FY25 cycle.

WRF has continued to develop, expand its portfolio, and align with legislative and policy priorities over the years, shifting the goals of the selection process and necessitating different uses of priority areas (including *methods*, *strategies*, and *topics*) throughout the process. From FY19–22, the main goal of the selections was to identify and fund numerous promising and innovative state-level programs to establish a sizeable portfolio of innovative programs through which WRF could evaluate and derive lessons learned or best practices. As WRF began to align with IPP priorities and expand successful state programs to the national scale, the selection goals shifted to identifying fewer, high-quality programs that fill specific gaps in a WRF-led portfolio. For FY25, therefore, IDA recommended that WRF *require* submissions to align with the priority areas to be considered for selection.

b. Submission Packet

In addition to designated priority areas, the call for proposals includes a submission template, with accompanying instructions, to standardize the information received. Table 3 outlines the materials included in the submission packet, and the documents are available in Supplement 1. IDA designed the proposal template to align with the evaluation criteria reviewers consider when assessing submissions (see Section 2.B.2). In addition to general information about the program specifics, team, and proposed budget, the template also requests information about the program’s suitability for use in the NG, evidence of effectiveness, and evaluation plan. The template contains short and detailed questions instead of requiring broad descriptions to make it more accessible for program managers who typically do not have a research or evaluation background or experience with grant writing.

Table 3. Documents Included in WRF’s State Programs Submission Packet

Document	Description
Submission Packet	<p>IDA and WRF worked together to design the following materials for all applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for proposals • Program proposal instructions • Program proposal template • Funding request template

c. Initial Review

Once proposals are received, IDA provides feedback and solicits input from WRF on proposals received by the early deadline. The goal of this feedback is two-fold: 1) to improve the quality and clarity of the final submissions (e.g., is the written proposal clear and easy to understand?); and 2) improve the proposed programs’ quality, feasibility, and relevance to WRF’s programmatic priorities (e.g., does the proposed program merit

panelist review and WRF consideration?). Beginning in FY25, IDA assigned each suggestion a priority level (low, moderate, high) to guide the submitting S/T/DC; this was important because program managers often complete the proposals in their free time. For certain questions and comments (e.g., policy- and funding-related considerations), IDA solicits guidance and feedback from WRF. Submitting S/T/DC may choose to revise and re-submit their proposal or consider their original submission final.

As the final proposals are received, IDA reviews them individually, checking for completion and satisfaction of basic submission requirements. If needed, IDA and WRF schedule calls with submitting S/T/DC to gather additional information and/or documents. IDA makes note of any submissions that are incomplete, poor quality, and/or unaligned with WRF's priority areas and forwards them to WRF for their decision on whether to exclude them from the review panels. IDA also reviews the submissions for any that exceed expectations and requirements. IDA will forward any exceptional submissions to WRF for their decision on whether to exclude the submission from the review panels and select the program immediately. No submission has merited immediate selection since the inception of the process. In tandem with submission review, IDA has historically organized the proposals by prevention strategy to structure the panels and to ensure the categories include no more than six proposals. As of the FY25 cycle, the prevention strategy organization is only used internally for programmatic review. The panels are instead structured by proposal applicant availability to join a conference call with the reviewers.

2. Evaluate Submissions: Review Panels (RPs)

Each year, WRF convenes RPs comprised of subject matter experts internal and external to NGB. In past review cycles, experts within NGB spanned across J-1 offices (e.g., Sexual Assault Prevention and Response, Behavioral Health, Integrated Primary Prevention, Office of Air Surgeon/Army Surgeon, Drug Reduction, Family Programs, Suicide Prevention, Transition Assistance). External experts included DoD offices (e.g., Defense Suicide Prevention Office, Office of People Analytics, Military-Civilian Transition Office), MOMRP, and other federal agencies (e.g., Veterans Health Administration, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration). Involving individuals from such a wide variety of roles facilitates a robust, comprehensive discussion and review of submissions.

IDA assigns about five to eight reviewers to each panel session based on their area of expertise and to ensure an even distribution of internal and external experts and military and civilian representation. WRF and IDA then convene a kick-off meeting with all reviewers to introduce the review process. After the meeting, reviewers receive an invitation to their panel session, a reviewer guide describing the process (Table 4 and Supplement 2), and proposals for their panel session. WRF instructs reviewers to read all proposals assigned to their panel and preliminarily evaluate each on an overall dimension

(excellent, good, fair, poor). WRF also assigns reviewers one to two proposals to read in greater depth so they can begin the discussion of their assigned proposals during the panel session.

Table 4. Materials Provided to Panelists

Document	Description
Review Panel panelist materials	<p>IDA developed numerous documents to facilitate panelist review and evaluation of the proposals during the independent (pre-review panel) review and the review panels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panelist Guide • WRF Overview • Evaluation Criteria worksheet • Priority Area Guidelines • Preliminary Review and Evaluations Excel Workbook • Submission Overviews and Evidence Summaries

WRF convenes the four-hour panel sessions entirely in-person.¹³ IDA facilitates the panels' discussions, as detailed in the facilitator guide (Supplement 3). Reviewer discussion focuses on the extent to which each proposal meets the evaluation criteria. Table 5 summarizes the evaluation criteria; Supplement 2 provides a full description of each criterion. After the discussion of a proposal, IDA facilitates a 30-minute conference call between the proposal points of contact and the review panel. The reviewers are instructed to ask questions to inform their evaluation of the proposal, gathering additional information on criteria they marked as "need more information." If needed, IDA directs the questioning to reviewers who asked relevant questions during the panel conversation and/or follows up on discrepancies identified in IDA's review and note-taking. After the call, reviewers record their evaluations in the evaluation criteria worksheet (Supplement 2). After evaluating all submissions one by one, reviewers may revisit their evaluation of any proposal before concluding the panel session.

¹³ Review panels were held virtually on Microsoft Teams for the FY21 and FY22 cycles.

Table 5. Review Panel Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Description
Aligned with WRF priority prevention strategies	Does the program align with at least one WRF priority prevention strategy?
Applies WRF priority methods	Does the program apply the WRF priority methods?
Suitable to the target population	Is the proposed program both suitable for the intended population and culturally appropriate?
Logical	Is there a clear and coherent relationship between a program's goals, target population, activities, and intended outcomes?
Distinguishable	Is the program unique/novel (i.e., not redundant with existing DoD programs)?
Feasible	Can the program requirements (e.g., for additional staff, contractors, funding, and participation time) reasonably be met on a long-term basis?
Effective	Is there evidence of the proposed program's effectiveness (e.g., demonstrated positive change in relevant attitudes and/or behavior as measured before and after implementation)?
Evaluation plan	Does the proposal clearly articulate plans for a reliable evaluation of the program?
Global evaluation	What is your overall assessment of this proposal?

IDA asks all reviewers to complete a feedback form about the review process. Feedback from past review sessions has been instrumental in refining the review process. For example, IDA streamlined the RP evaluation criteria based on reviewer feedback (e.g., removed *acceptable to participants* because it was too similar to *suitable for the population* and removed *impactful* because it was too similar to *effective*).

3. Select Programs: Programmatic Review

After the panels, IDA summarizes the reviewers' discussion of each proposal as it pertains to the evaluation criteria as well as any areas for clarification and recommendations for implementation (Table 6 and Supplement 4). These summaries directly inform programmatic review, an iterative process during which WRF leaders make final program selections.

Table 6. Review Process Outputs

Document	Description
Review Process Outputs Packet	IDA summarizes the review panels and synthesizes key feedback from panelists on each submission as they pertain to the evaluation criteria. WRF uses this packet to inform the Programmatic Review. Also includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early Review Feedback• Submission Overviews and Evidence Summaries

If reviewers note any areas for clarification, particularly for a highly rated submission, WRF follows up with the proposal points of contact to request further detail. The WRF leadership team then convenes to review the proposals; IDA is not involved in this review session. During programmatic review, WRF leadership focuses on proposals that have favorable ratings and are aligned with NGB/WRF programmatic priorities. During this process, WRF leadership also discusses other practical considerations including receipt of funding from Congress, geographic coverage, and balance of ANG and ARNG programs. WRF then contacts its initial selection of programs to ensure the programs are able to obligate funds within the FY. Once selection decisions and funding amounts are finalized, NGB sends an e-mail announcing the selected programs to NGB and S/T/DC leadership. Finally, WRF provides all applicants with individualized feedback about selection decisions, including a statement describing reviewer feedback. Beginning in FY25, IDA recommended WRF solicit feedback from applicants on their experiences with the submission process to identify areas in need of improvement and additional guidance.

C. Supplemental Materials

As described in the preceding sections, submission, review, and selection of proposals relies on several supporting documents. Table 7. summarizes these documents.

Table 7. Documents Supporting WRF's State Programs Selection Process

Document	Description
Submission Packet	IDA and WRF worked together to design the following materials for all applicants: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call for proposals• Program proposal instructions• Program proposal template• Funding request template
Review Panel panelist materials	IDA developed numerous documents to facilitate panelist review and evaluation of the proposals during the independent (pre-review panel) review and the review panels. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Panelist Guide• WRF Overview• Evaluation Criteria worksheet• Priority Area Guidelines• Preliminary Review and Evaluations Excel Workbook• Submission Overviews and Evidence Summaries
Review Panel Facilitator Guide	IDA follows this document when facilitating review panel discussions. It outlines the review panel process and key discussion points. Also includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review Panel Anonymous Feedback form
Review Process Outputs Packet	IDA summarizes the review panels and synthesizes key feedback from panelists on each submission, as they pertain to the evaluation criteria. WRF uses this packet to inform the Programmatic Review. Also includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Early Review Feedback• Submission Overviews and Evidence Summaries

3. Evaluate Effectiveness, Disseminate, and Implement

A. Introduction

The NGB WRF Division supports promising programs in NG S/T/DC, with the aim of identifying effective approaches to preventing harmful behavior. This directly supports DoDI 6400.09, which requires the implementation of data-informed and research-based prevention programs.¹⁴ As such, all NGB-supported activities must conduct a program evaluation to assess the quality of their implementation and their effects on Service Member outcomes. To facilitate these evaluation efforts, IDA provides technical assistance to supported programs.¹⁵ This chapter provides an overview of the technical assistance IDA provides, which falls in the Evaluate Effectiveness and Disseminate and Implement areas of the State Programs Process. It also updates and expands on content from IDA's 2024 *State Programs Annual Report*¹⁶ to briefly summarize the activities and results of the State Programs that were active during the 2024 Calendar Year, with more detail provided in the attachments (see Table 8).

B. Process Overview

As a condition of WRF funding, all state programs are required to develop and implement an evaluation plan to assess the effectiveness of their interventions and to document results. IDA also assists WRF with synthesizing challenges and best practices across programs, with the aim of disseminating this information across the NG and informing the implementation of WRF-driven prevention efforts.

¹⁴ Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, *DoD Instruction 6400.09. DoD Policy on Integrated Primary Prevention of Self-Directed Harm and Prohibited Abuse or Harm* (Department of Defense, September 2020).

¹⁵ Originally described in a prior IDA report: Dina Eliezer, Ashlie M. Williams, Dave I. Cotting, Heidi C. Reutter, and Rachel D. Dubin, *National Guard Suicide Prevention and Resilience Innovation Framework*, IDA Paper P-22668 (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, July 2021).

¹⁶ Juliana Esposito, Dina Eliezer, Emily A. Fedele, Zoe L. Pamonag, and Ashlie M. Williams. *State Programs Annual Report*, IDA Product 3000754/1 (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, March 2024).

1. Technical Assistance for Evaluating Effectiveness

IDA works closely with each program to develop evaluation plans and supporting materials. Historically, IDA's technical assistance begins with a structured orientation process for each new cohort of WRF-supported programs. IDA provides a packet of informational resources for each program team to refer to during their period of support from WRF and IDA (see Table 8). These materials serve to ensure that all program teams have a clear understanding of WRF's expectations for their participation on the State Programs Process. IDA also typically delivers a series of trainings on the fundamentals of program evaluation, metric selection, and survey design to the program teams. As the NG's Integrated Primary Prevention Workforce develops capacity for evaluation through other training mechanisms (e.g., SPARX) and becomes more involved in the implementation and evaluation of WRF-supported programs, IDA may modify the training portion of the orientation process.

IDA provides the following materials to facilitate the orientation process, including communication of engagement expectations with WRF and IDA; documentation of program activities, challenges, and results; and assessment of program progress.

Table 8. Orientation Materials

Document type	Description
Welcome Packet	Lists key IDA points of contact, required activities, and reporting requirements for all state programs
Introductory discussion guide	Guides IDA's initial meetings to learn about state program implementation and evaluation plans and technical assistance needs
Quarterly Report template	Outlines information state programs are required to report on a quarterly basis, including progress, challenges, and results of any data collections
State Program milestone criteria	Establish eight milestones that state programs should aim to achieve to show progress and maintain eligibility for WRF support

After the group orientation process, IDA provides individualized technical assistance to program teams through a series of phone calls, emails, and document reviews. The aim of these efforts is to clarify IDA's understanding of the program, the program team's implementation plans and capacity for conducting an evaluation, and the best course of action for evaluation (balancing rigor and feasibility). The outputs of IDA's technical assistance have evolved over time. As of this report, they included:

- **Conceptual frameworks** to visualize the hypothesized relationships between key variables expected to either affect or be affected by the program. Implementation teams and stakeholders can use this tool during program development, expansion, and refinement to identify desired outcomes and theorize the drivers of observed program effects.
- **Logic models** to illustrate critical program elements, including required program inputs and activities; anticipated outputs and short-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes; and metrics used to measure progress toward corresponding outcome objectives. The program team can refer to this product to plan and develop program activities, implementation, and evaluation and to communicate with involved stakeholders, including leadership.
- **Written evaluation plans** to outline the purpose, design (e.g., single group pre-post design),¹⁷ and data sources and data collection strategies. IDA typically provides these recommendations to the program team and refines them based on the team's input. The written evaluation plan serves as the formal record of the planned evaluation and should be updated periodically as evaluation efforts proceed. To date, evaluation plans have primarily focused on measuring outcomes, with fewer process measures.
- **Fidelity checklists** to measure the quality of program implementation and delivery. As most WRF-supported programs involve trainings, IDA recommends that the training facilitators complete a fidelity checklist for each training session. The checklists ask the facilitator to document attendance, adherence to the training plan/curriculum, and participant engagement. The program team can refer to the checklist data to inform process improvements and assist in the interpretation of findings on participant outcomes.
- **Participant surveys** to assess changes in key outcomes over time. IDA works with the program teams to identify validated measures aligned with the program's short-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes and develop participant surveys to administer, at a minimum, immediately before and after the training. Although some programs may incorporate administrative or other secondary data sources into their evaluations, WRF-support

¹⁷ IDA encourages each supported program to employ, at a minimum, a single group pre-post design. Other designs (e.g., quasi-experimental designs; pre-post designs with additional follow-up data collections) have historically been infeasible for program teams to implement, given existing capabilities and resources. See IDA's FY23 Annual Report for discussion of evaluation-related challenges.

programs have typically relied on primary data collection through pre-post surveys. Data collected from these surveys are critical for measuring short-term outcomes and some elements of process effectiveness (e.g., participant satisfaction).

- **Data analysis and interpretation** using approaches selected based upon each program’s evaluation plan and the quality and quantity of their collected data. Typically, this includes calculation of descriptive statistics and effect sizes (e.g., Cohen’s d) and tests to explore individual-level differences in outcomes (e.g., t-tests, analyses of variance, regression analyses). IDA presents analytic results to the program team and assists in interpretation of results. WRF and program teams use analytic findings to assess program effectiveness and to include in program dissemination and communication efforts.

2. Technical Assistance for Dissemination and Implementation

Based on the data, reports, and other documents the state programs provide, IDA develops materials that facilitate the dissemination of information on each program to NG and other external audiences. These materials include ad-hoc briefings, describing program progress and data analysis results, and formal annual reports (including this report). IDA’s prior annual reports synthesized lessons learned across state programs and reported detailed evaluation results and implementation considerations for each state program receiving WRF support during the specified fiscal years (FY22 and FY23). Section 3.C and Supplements 7–10 provide information on the four programs that received support in FY24.

Table 9. Products to Support Dissemination and Implementation

Document type	Description
FY22 State Programs Annual Report Available at: https://www.ida.org/research-and-publications/publications/all/s/st/state-programs-annual-report-national-guard-bureau-warrior-resilience-and-fitness	Synthesizes challenges and best practices derived from state programs supported since FY19. Provides detailed information about nine state programs that demonstrated initial evidence of effectiveness.
FY23 State Programs Annual Report Available at: https://www.ida.org/research-and-publications/publications/all/s/st/state-programs-annual-report-national-guard-bureau-warrior-resilience-and-fitness-2024	Updates and expands upon synthesis provided in FY22 State Programs Annual Report. Provides detailed information about 21 state programs, including effective and ineffective programs.

Document type	Description
<p>Considerations for the Scale-Up of Prevention Programs in the National Guard</p> <p>Available at: https://www.ida.org/research-and-publications/publications/all/c/co/considerations-for-the-scale-up-of-prevention-programs-in-the-national-guard</p>	<p>Provides a framework to guide NGB in the large-scale implementation of effective programs.</p>

Additionally, IDA’s publication entitled *Considerations for the Scale-up of Prevention Programs in the National Guard*¹⁸ provides a framework to guide the implementation of state programs on larger scales (e.g., across multiple states/territories or across all 54 NG S/T/DC). In this publication, IDA recommends several avenues for disseminating information about state programs to wider audiences and for facilitating scaled-up implementation. Two key related recommendations from the report were to 1) leverage existing interpersonal fora¹⁹ to share information about state programs with new audiences; and 2) create detailed documentation of state programs (e.g., a written standard operating procedure) to share with interested parties. Toward this end, IDA began expanding technical assistance for state programs in FY24 to include support for the creation of detailed, external-facing documentation of program implementation and evaluation elements (e.g., logic models, formally written evaluation procedures).

C. Summary of State Programs

Going into FY24, WRF reduced the number of state programs it supported in an effort to align its portfolio with a more specific set of programmatic priorities. Table 10 provides a brief description of the programs WRF supported in FY24. Three of the four programs that WRF continued to support had previously demonstrated feasibility for implementation, used approaches grounded firmly in existing research, and met pressing local needs in the states/territories of implementation. These included CALM & Collect (implemented in Guam), Firearms Sentinel (implemented in New York and previously named EADS SAFE), and Mental Health First Aid (implemented in Rhode Island). WRF continued support for these programs to better evaluate outcomes. The fourth program WRF supported, Work for Warriors Georgia, similarly showed strong feasibility and evidence for supporting protective factors (e.g., connection to resources and secure employment). WRF continued support for this program as a “National-Select” program, with implementation and evaluation in additional states and continued refinement of the program model to support efficient implementation on a larger scale.

¹⁸ Ashlie M. Williams, Dina Eliezer, Juliana Esposito, Emily A. Fedele, and Zoe L. Pamonag, *Considerations for the Scale-up of Prevention Programs in the National Guard*, IDA Product 3000755 (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, 2024).

¹⁹ For example: National Guard Association of the United States; Adjutants General Association of the United States, IPP symposia, and other communities of practice or working groups.

Table 10. Overview of Fiscal Year 2024 Programs

Program	Description
CALM & Collect (Supplement 7)	Online training teaches gatekeepers (Unit Suicide Intervention Officers (SIO)) and leaders (Commanders, First Sergeants, Supply non-commissioned officers) to help Service Members at risk of suicide reduce access to lethal means by using on-base firearm storage locations. As of February 2025, 87 gatekeepers and leaders received the CALM training. Participants demonstrated statistically significant improvements in beliefs and attitudes toward lethal means (LM) safety and individuals with a history of suicidal behavior, awareness of safe storage resources, and confidence in supporting individuals experiencing heightened risk.
Firearms Sentinel (Supplement 8)	In-person firearms class with suicide prevention content to spread awareness of mental health risk factors, increase use of safe storage practices, and reduce incidence of suicide by firearms. Trained 41 Airmen. Preliminary evaluation findings show moderate-to-high intentions to use safe storage options and tactical pauses when storing and accessing firearms and show increases in suicide knowledge, storage option awareness, and perceived importance of safety and suicide-related risk factors when making storage decisions.
Mental Health First Aid (Supplement 9)	In-person gatekeeper training program to enhance prevention and intervention skills for behavioral health concerns. As of November 2024, 131 Service Members in the Rhode Island NG have received the training. Evaluation findings show that participants have significantly increased their confidence in gatekeeper training skills such as preparedness to talk to someone showing signs of mental health challenges and confidence in ability to listen to someone in distress.
Work for Warriors (Supplement 10)	Screening and referral to NG resources for Service Members, veterans, and spouses through an online platform. Service Members are connected to various helping services within 72 hours. Those needing employment assistance receive support directly from Work for Warriors. In 2024, 51% of referrals were to Family Programs, 27% were to Tricare or Veterans Affairs services, and 14% were to employment/financial resources. On average, direct connection with a service provider occurred within 3 days of screening.

For each of these four programs, attachments to this report provide a “spotlight page” that summarizes the program at a high level and “program information and materials” that describe implementation and evaluation progress in greater detail (Table 11). Full evaluation plans are available upon request. All materials are working documents and will be updated as program implementation and evaluation continues.

Table 11. Evaluation and Dissemination Technical Assistance Materials

Document type	Description
Spotlight page	One-pager highlighting the purpose of the program, key evaluation results, and high-level implementation steps
Program information and materials	Narrative summary describing details of the program, its evaluation and evaluation results, and implementation considerations, experiences, and lessons learned from implementing states.
Evaluation plan	Conceptual framework, logic model, evaluation design, and data collection materials to guide local-level evaluation efforts

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4. Challenges and Recommendations

Below, IDA compiles ongoing challenges and proposes recommendations to the WRF division's State Programs Process. Similar to the organization of this report, the challenges and recommendations are organized into those pertaining to A) the identification and selection of new programs; and B) strengthening and support of active, WRF-selected state programs.

A. Assess Gaps, Invite Submissions, and Select Programs

Over the past six years, IDA has monitored inefficiencies and solicited feedback from panelists to inform potential process improvements to the first three steps of the State Programs Process. Each year, IDA presents WRF with recommendations to improve the process. This section describes ongoing challenges and process refinements, and Table 12 details recommendations for consideration in the next selection cycle.

Historically, there have been many challenges in the Submission and Initial Review period. The number of submissions varies greatly each year. In recent years, especially following the implementation of the Integrated Primary Prevention Workforce (IPPW) and strategic changes within WRF, WRF has received fewer submissions from a smaller number of S/T/DC. To encourage submissions, WRF expanded dissemination of the call for proposals beyond senior leaders, sending it to the IPPW and program managers of past and current WRF programs and submission. While this is a helpful practice, it is largely informal. WRF should consider creating a permanent webpage or Teams channel that provides regularly-updated information about the state programs selection process to enable all NG stakeholders to access up-to-date information on-demand.

Of the received submissions, many are often of limited quality and relevance. To facilitate better written proposals, WRF instituted earlier IDA recommendations to develop clearer instructions and template prompts and allow for longer submission windows. WRF also gave applicants the opportunity to receive proposal feedback from IDA before the final deadline. Initially, this feedback largely focused on submission clarity and detail, as some proposals were poorly-written and lacking in details about program specifics, with applicants failing to answer many of the prompts in the template. Additionally, however, IDA and external reviewers found that many proposals described poorly-designed or poorly-planned programs. To address this, IDA began working with WRF to expand early feedback to the program itself, rather than focusing solely on the submission's clarity. The expanded feedback, as well as more explicit requirements in the submission instructions,

intends to encourage programs that better align with WRF priority topics and methods and that are feasible to implement. WRF should continue this process. Beyond this, WRF may be able to avoid continued issues of program quality by soliciting proposals for adaptations to specific programs or practices of interest, with the aim of increasing the use of research-informed programs as described in DoDI 6400.11.

Over the years, reviewers have struggled to rigorously assess the submissions according to the evaluation criteria. Often, this is due to missing or unclear information in the written proposal. Accordingly, WRF implemented calls with applicants before the review panels and during the panels. IDA facilitated the pre-panel calls and shared brief summaries of the proposals with the reviewers. The conference calls took place during the panels and allowed the reviewers to directly speak with the submitting S/T/DC to better inform their understanding evaluation. Missing information, however, is not the only cause for reviewer challenges; some panels lack the expertise necessary to evaluate certain criteria (e.g., whether an activity likely to be effective, based on existing research). WRF has attempted to solicit more non-NGB subject matter experts as reviewers (e.g., individuals with expertise in program evaluation methods). The in-person nature of the panels, however, remains a barrier for the participation of non-NGB individuals. In 2025, WRF invited state-level IPPW personnel, who provided highly technical commentary and evaluations of the submissions. Many of the submissions failed to satisfy their programmatic and research standards, as non-IPPW personnel with different technical skills are common WRF applicants.

Lastly, IDA has provided many recommendations to reduce the burden on submitting S/T/DC throughout the selection process. Currently, applicants must write a formal submission, complete a funding request, receive command approval, and participate in two 30–60-minute calls. IDA anticipates this may be too burdensome on applicants, especially those that are not selected. To address this, IDA has recommended delaying the command approval signature, soliciting feedback from the state applicants on process improvements, and providing them with timely updates on and notifications of funding decisions. WRF could also consider hosting submission guidance and a proposal template on a permanent webpage or Teams channel year-round to enable S/T/DC to work on these documents further in advance, with a caveat that specific guidance and priorities are subject to change.

**Table 12. Challenges and Recommendations for the State Programs Process
Fiscal Year 2026 Selection Cycle**

Challenges	IDA Recommendations
Few submissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate the call for proposals across different groups, including applicants of prior high-quality submissions, program managers of previously funded state programs, and IPPW Extend the submission period to allow for more time to complete proposals
Submissions misaligned with WRF priority topics and methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement an annual landscape analysis or request for information across the 54 S/T/DC to identify relevant, state-level best practices that WRF can invite to submit for funding or technical assistance Require, instead of encouraging, proposal alignment with WRF priority areas Remove incomplete, unclear proposals from consideration by the review panels Extend the submission period to allow for more time to complete proposals Abbreviate the submission template Simplify submission instructions
Reviewer challenges in understanding and assessing proposals according to evaluation criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold pre-panel meetings with state program applicants, IDA, and WRF to assist with refining draft proposal Expand subject matter expertise of reviewers through outreach to individuals and organizations external to NGB (e.g., industry, academia)
High burden on submitting S/T/DC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace Command Signature requirement with planned steps to secure leadership approval Implement a tiered submission process, starting with a letter of intent or abbreviated application template, followed by a detailed template for high-quality proposals only Send selection decisions and reviewer feedback to all submissions Provide previously unselected proposals with more individualized feedback and an invitation to submit next year Solicit feedback from submitting S/T/DC after selections are final via an online survey
Delays in funding distribution and program implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer reduced initial funding and/or technical assistance for new (not yet operating) programs

B. Evaluate Effectiveness, Disseminate, and Implement

Much has changed in Department of Defense (DoD) and National Guard Bureau (NGB) prevention efforts since IDA first began offering technical assistance to WRF's state programs in 2019. For instance, DoD introduced new policies on integrated primary prevention (IPP) that direct the implementation of research-based and research-informed programs, WRF priorities for state programs have evolved, and the new IPPW share responsibility for selecting and implementing prevention programs withing NG S/T/DC. These changes provide WRF with a valuable opportunity to improve the quality and effectiveness of its state program efforts.

Understanding how a program's implementation influences its outcomes is critical to strengthening NG prevention capabilities. This can be achieved through *process evaluation* methods, which examine a program's inputs, activities, and outputs to shed better light on its outcomes. While state program typically collect data on basic process metrics (e.g., number of participants and activities held, participant satisfaction), WRF should place greater emphasis on process evaluation in its requirements of supported state programs. This could include requiring state programs to collect and report data on fidelity and adaptations in required quarterly reports to WRF. WRF can also offer further education to program teams to expand their understanding of key program elements (see Chapter 2.B.2 for discussion of challenges with poorly-designed or poorly-described programs in initial submissions).

Accountability for evaluating effectiveness has grown in recent years, as stipulated in DoDIs 6400.09 and 6400.11. Despite this, state program teams still struggle to evaluate the outcomes of their efforts, even with technical assistance. To overcome these challenges, IDA recommends that WRF require higher minimum standards of evaluation as a condition of state program funding and continue to provide expanded technical assistance focused on building local capacity for implementing rigorous evaluation methods. In particular, states often encounter barriers to implementing evaluation designs that compare individuals exposed to program activities to those not exposed. They have also struggled to measure intermediate and long-term outcomes despite attempts with primary and secondary data, limiting evaluations to weak outcomes that are observable only immediately after a live activity. It may be possible to overcome these barriers by applying more structured implementation or roll-out designs (e.g., evaluation designs which facilitate the use of comparison groups by staggering implementation). IDA proposes an example approach in Supplement 6. However, states may need directives from WRF to secure the organizational support necessary to achieve this.

Finally, state programs have faced questions about their effects on downstream outcomes such as unit cohesion and suicide. These types of outcomes are of high priority to leaders, and measuring changes in them is vital to maintaining accountability to ultimate priorities of readiness and lethality. Importantly, however, WRF must assist state programs

with balancing interest in downstream effects with methodological issues inherent in the evaluation of those effects. Many previously-supported state programs, for example, aimed to influence upstream risk and protective factors for harmful behavior, and it is often hard to measure their downstream effects. Further, no state program operates in a vacuum; there are myriad other factors that influence desired outcomes. These dynamics make it very difficult to reliably evaluate a single program’s impacts on long-term or downstream outcomes. In light of this, WRF should assist states with communicating limitations to leadership and emphasize the importance of *theorized* or *research-informed* connections to long-term behavioral outcomes of interest. This may allow state programs to focus more closely on robust evaluation of short-term or intermediate outcomes while still answering questions about broader impacts. IDA has begun incorporating *conceptual models* into its technical assistance efforts to facilitate improved understanding and communication about connections between program activities, external influences, and long-term outcomes.

Table 13. Technical Assistance Challenges and Recommendations

Challenges	IDA Recommendations
Evaluation; evaluation methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued funding as a condition of evaluation • Offer technical assistance for states with limited evaluation capacities
Outcome evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased guidance on alternative implementation designs (e.g., stepped-wedge, waitlist) to facilitate outcome data collection
Limited process evaluation efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place greater emphasis on process evaluation; provide examples of priority process metrics to collect
Unrealistic expectations about impact evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance on how to communicate program/research limitations to leadership • Emphasize importance of theory and research-informed evidence in relation to intended outcomes and impacts (e.g., visualize connections using logic models, conceptual models)

IDA provides additional recommendations, tailored to specific state programs, in Supplements 7–10.

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Appendix A.

Portfolio Extraction Instructions

To access Supplements 1 through 10 in the portfolio, follow these instructions:

1. In the file list on the left side of the portfolio, click the name of the item you would like to open.
2. Click the Extract button (circled in blue in Figure D-1).
3. Once the dialogue box opens, save the file to a folder on your computer.
4. Open the saved item from its saved location.

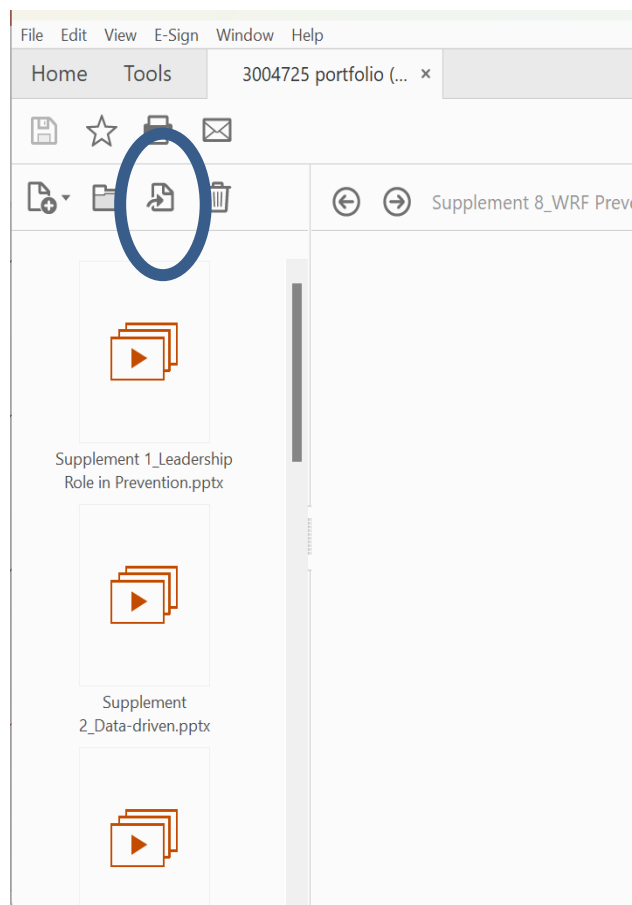


Figure A-1. Screenshot of File Extraction Tool for Adobe Portfolio

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Appendix B.

List of Illustrations

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Appendix C.

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- Eliezer, Dina, Ashlie M. Williams, Dave I. Cotting, Heidi C. Reutter, and Rachel D. Dubin. *National Guard Suicide Prevention and Resilience Innovation Framework*. IDA Paper P-22668 (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, July 2021).
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Appendix D. Abbreviations

ANG	Air National Guard
ARNG	Army National Guard
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CIPP	Comprehensive Integrated Primary Prevention
CPE	Continuing Prevention Education
DoD	Department of Defense
DoDI	Department of Defense Instruction
DoDM	Department of Defense Manual
FY	Fiscal Year
IDA	Institute for Defense Analyses
IPP	Integrated Primary Prevention
IPPW	Integrated Primary Prevention Workforce
LM	Lethal Means
MOMRP	Military Operational Medicine Research Program
NG	National Guard
NGB	National Guard Bureau
NIH	National Institutes of Health
PPOA	Primary Prevention Plan of Action
PTAC	Prevention Technical Assistance Center
RP	Review Panel
SIO	Suicide Intervention Officers
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound
S/T/DC	States, Territories, and District of Columbia
WRF	Warrior Resilience and Fitness

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