



ApexOS Advisory LLC

# From Compliance to Capability

**Building an Integrated Public Safety Operating System for Airports**

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White paper · Version 2.0

Prepared by ApexOS Advisory LLC

Kevin Stormer, Founder & CEO

Companion to: The Airport Police Website as a Digital Public-Safety Capability

# Compliance Is The Floor, Capability Is The Outcome

Airport public safety programs are often managed as separate functions. Each can look compliant while the organization underperforms.

ApexOS proposes a different standard: demonstrate the capability that compliance is meant to produce.

|                      |                               |                                        |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 7                    | 6                             | 90                                     |
| Connected dimensions | Scored Capability Chain steps | Days to an executive-ready action plan |

The airport police website is an applied example, covered in the companion paper.



## Key Terms, Defined

### Capability

The reliable, evidenced ability to perform a mission under normal conditions, during disruption, and under sustained pressure.

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### Compliance

Meeting a stated requirement. It sets a floor and does not by itself prove readiness.

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### Operating system

The connected set of leadership, governance, processes, people, technology, and measures that produce performance.

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### Evidence

Records, measures, exercises, or audits that let leadership demonstrate performance.

# The Problem is Systemic, and Compliance Alone Does Not Close It

Airport operators must adopt and carry out a TSA-approved written security program under 49 CFR 1542.101.

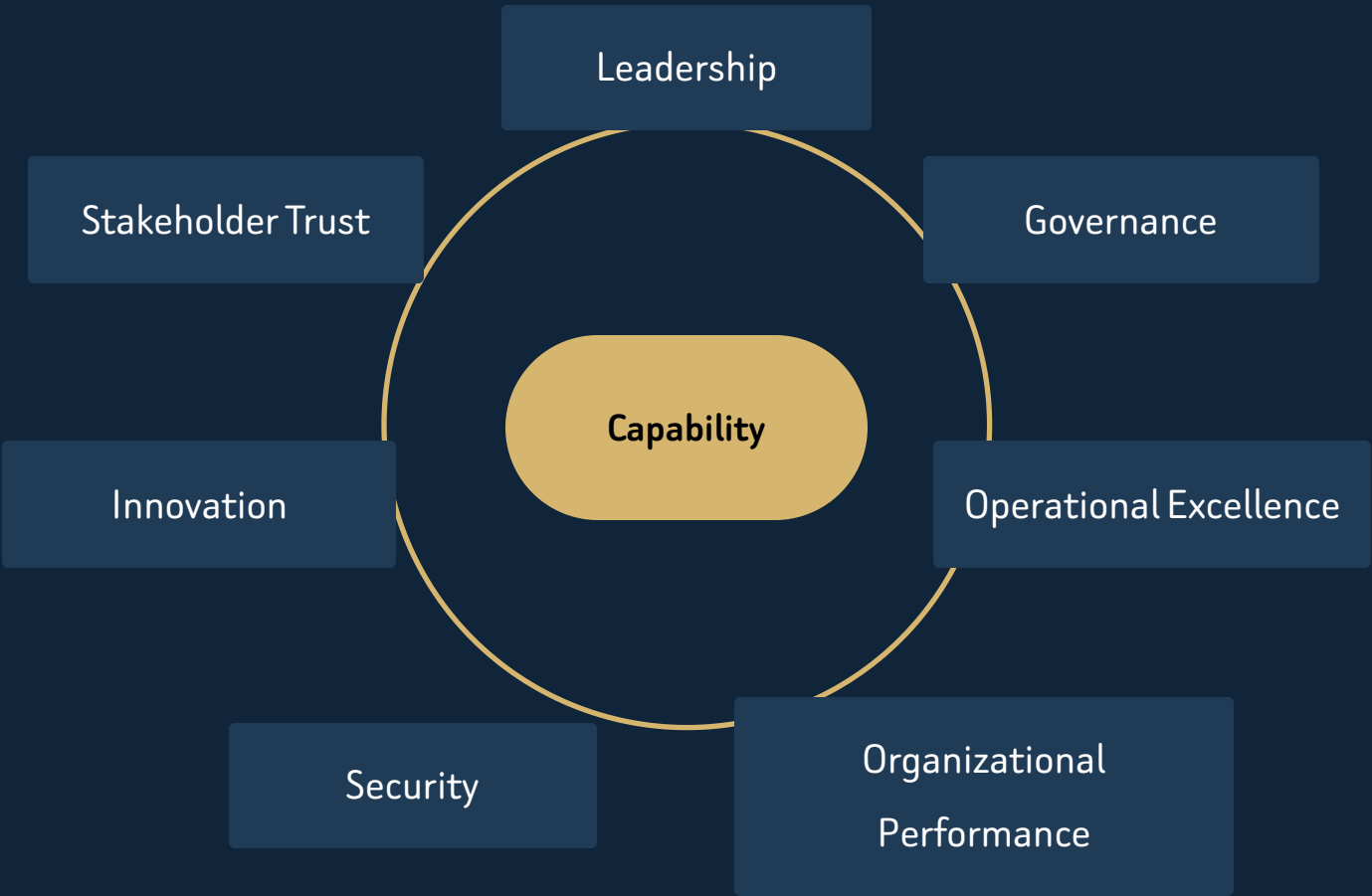
FEMA’s CPG 101 (Version 3.1, May 2025) guides emergency operations planning and stresses lessons from real-world events and exercises.

Both establish what must exist; neither proves it works across people, technology, facilities, and governance.

| Function           | Common question | System question                        |
|--------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------|
| Policy             | Is it current?  | Does it produce the required behavior? |
| Training           | Is it complete? | Does it produce the required behavior? |
| Staffing           | Is it in place? | Does it produce the required behavior? |
| Security           | Is it in place? | Does it produce the required behavior? |
| Emergency planning | Is it current?  | Does it produce the required behavior? |
| Technology         | Is it in place? | Does it produce the required behavior? |

A policy may be current while practice is inconsistent. Training may be complete while supervisors cannot translate it into performance.

# Seven Connected Dimensions



|                            |                                                                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Leadership                 | Direction, expectations, accountability                                |
| Governance                 | Authority, decision rights, oversight, risk tolerance                  |
| Operational Excellence     | Repeatable processes, standards, training                              |
| Organizational Performance | Meaningful measures that improve decisions                             |
| Security                   | Protects people, facilities, information, access, operations           |
| Innovation                 | Technology and analytics that improve capability, not just add tools   |
| Stakeholder Trust          | Confidence among passengers, employees, tenants, regulators, community |

# The Capability Chain: Now Scored

Test each critical function on six steps. The chain is only as strong as its lowest step.

| Step        | Question                           | Score |
|-------------|------------------------------------|-------|
| Authority   | Is authority defined?              | 0-3   |
| Design      | Is the operating design defined?   | 0-3   |
| People      | Are people ready to perform?       | 0-3   |
| Practice    | Does practice match the design?    | 0-3   |
| Evidence    | Can performance be demonstrated?   | 0-3   |
| Improvement | Does learning produce improvement? | 0-3   |

|        |        |         |          |
|--------|--------|---------|----------|
| 0      | 1      | 2       | 3        |
| Absent | Ad hoc | Defined | Measured |

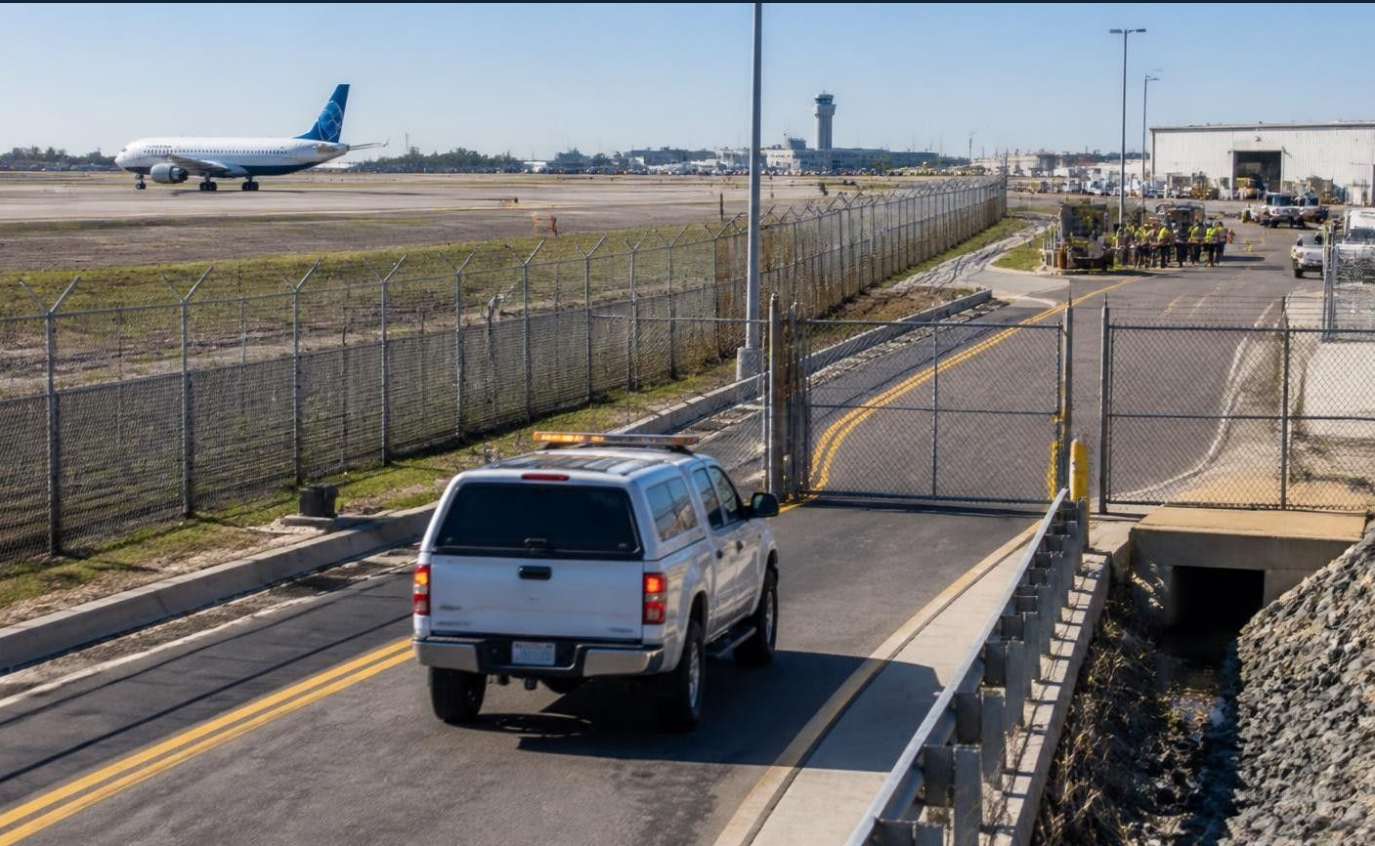
## 18 points per function

ApexOS proposes that any step scoring below 2 on a critical function is flagged regardless of total.

Scores and thresholds are ApexOS proposals, to be calibrated with each airport.

# Where Airports Commonly Lose Capability, and the Measure That Exposes It

| Capability loss                     | Measure or requirement                                                    |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fragmented ownership                | Measure whether each critical capability has one named accountable owner. |
| Policy-practice gaps                | Sample practice against policy and report the match rate.                 |
| Weak measurement                    | Replace activity counts with capacity, quality, and risk measures.        |
| Workforce pressure                  | Track vacancies, turnover, and time to fill against staffing needs.       |
| Technology without operating design | Require workflow, owner, data standard, and outcome before purchase.      |
| Compliance without learning         | Track corrective actions to closure and recurrence.                       |



# A 90-Day Capability Assessment



# Proof in Practice: Two Applications

Applied framework

## The airport police website

The companion paper scores an airport police website across 10 areas, treating it as a governed capability.

The Airport Police Website as a Digital Public-Safety Capability

Worked example · Placeholders only

## [Airport name or anonymized descriptor]

|                      |                                   |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Starting situation   | [to be supplied]                  |
| Baseline chain score | [x of 18]                         |
| Top findings         | [to be supplied]                  |
| 90-day result        | [measured outcome to be supplied] |

No result is shown until confirmed from a real ApexOS engagement.

# What Executives Should Ask, and The Governing Question

Who is accountable for each critical capability, and to what standard?

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How is performance measured, and what happens below the standard?

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How does leadership know an investment is producing value?

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How does the organization adapt when mission, technology, regulation, or risk changes?

## The governing question

**Does the organization merely demonstrate compliance, or can it demonstrate the capability that compliance is intended to produce?**

## ApexOS Advisory LLC

Led by Kevin Stormer, Founder & CEO, with 24+ years of public safety experience.

Book a free 20-minute discovery call at [apexosadvisory.com](https://apexosadvisory.com)

336.448.3690 | Pfafftown, North Carolina