

Release Notes: Benefit Cost Analysis Tool

Releases and Hotfixes

May 28, 2025

Release Details

Build 20250528.1331
Release Date: May 28, 2025
Release Classification: Release

UPDATE

Discount Rate Update

The BCA Toolkit has been updated to change the default discount rate to 7% in accordance with guidance from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This change affects all new project BCAs and aligns with the latest federal guidelines.

- The default Discount Rate in the Cost Estimation section is now set to 7%.
- When reviewing BCAs completed with the previous 3.1% discount rate, analysts can still select 3.1% from the toggle next to the Discount Rate input.
- A warning message will appear below the Discount Rate input and in the BCA Summary section if the 3.1% rate is selected, indicating that the default rate has been overridden.
- Additionally, the 3.1% discount rate will be visually highlighted with an oval in the Project Summary screen and in the report.

UPDATE

Pre-Calculated Benefits Update

Pre-calculated benefits in the BCA Toolkit have also been updated to reflect the 7% discount rate. The revised pre-calculated benefit values are available on the [How to Complete a Streamlined BCA webpage](#). The updated values for flood acquisition, flood elevation and residential tornado safe rooms are now integrated into the Toolkit.

UPDATE

Removal of Social Benefits

The BCA Toolkit has been updated to align with an anticipated policy change to remove social benefits from all analyses. Therefore, social benefits are no longer included in the calculation of total project benefits. This update will impact the benefit-cost ratios of certain project types, including those using the Flood, Historical Damages/Professional Expected Damages, Landslide, and Hurricane Wind modules. As part of this update, the removal of social benefits also simplifies the BCA Toolkit's interface. The card banner text was revised (e.g., "Standard Benefits – Building Damage" was changed to "Building Damages"), and the BCA Summary section was streamlined to include only the Total Project Benefits, Total Project Cost and Benefit-Cost Ratio.

UPDATE

Removal of Riverine Future Precipitation Impacts and FFRMS

To comply with President Trump's Executive Orders, FEMA removed the future precipitation impacts functionality in the Riverine Flood Module, as well as the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) compliance check that applied to riverine flood BCAs that considered future precipitation.

UPDATE

Removal of Distributional Weights

To comply with President Trump's Executive Orders, the distributional weights functionality in the BCA Toolkit has been removed. Please see the January 8, 2025 release notes entry for information about how distributional weights and the distributional weight multiplier (DWM) were implemented in the BCA Toolkit. With the DWM removed, the Total Building Replacement Value is now calculated as the square footage of the building multiplied by the Building Replacement Value per square foot.

UPDATE

Updated Inflation Index for May 2025

The BCA Toolkit's inflation index was updated from 1.675137096 for January 2025 to 1.703880239 for May 2025, to reflect adjustments made by Engineering News-Record (ENR).

Source: <https://www.fema.gov/grants/tools/benefit-cost-analysis>