

Exercise Design and Operation

- A. Set overall purpose and specific goals
 1. Start small, expand as the year goes on – test single elements first, combined elements later.
 2. State the overall purpose of the exercise
 3. Set goals – use SMART principles (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Task-oriented)
 4. Choose an exercise format
 - a. Tabletop or Game
 - b. Drill – test one smaller element
 - c. Functional – test operations at one site
 - d. Full scale – test all major elements together
- B. Create a scenario to accommodate the goals
 1. Scenario should be realistic,
 2. Scenario can be abstract if realism would be too sensitive, but goals must be realistic
 2. Make sure scenario allows a means for all goals to be realized
- C. Develop the exercise plan
 1. Put everything in writing
 2. Keep it clear and succinct
 3. It should include:
 - a. Specific goals
 - b. Goal-related metrics to be measured and evaluated
 - c. Brief scenario description
 - d. A list of facilities and sites to be used
 - e. A list of any supplies or materials needed
 - f. A list of persons or groups who will need to participate
 - g. A pre-exercise communications plan to make sure everyone is informed
 - h. An evaluation plan that provides for both self-evaluation and external evaluation.
 4. Leave enough time for each element of the exercise to be carried out, and for meals
 5. Leave enough time at the end for a group feedback meeting (Hot Wash)
 6. Create supporting documents
 - a. Master Scenario Events List (MSEL) with injects
 - b. Pre-written messages
 - c. Scenario narrative
 - d. Scoring sheets
 - e. Hot Wash feedback forms
 7. Make arrangements for access to any facilities
 8. Notify local police or fire officials in writing, if needed for drills in public areas
- D. Execute the exercise
 1. Make sure everyone has the information they need before beginning
 2. Track all participants in some manner to assure safety
 3. Follow the MSEL, including any scenario “injects”
- E. Evaluate the exercise
 1. Use self-evaluation, independent evaluators, or a combination of both
 2. Prepare the evaluation plan and any needed forms in advance.
 3. Do the evaluation as soon afterward as possible, even on the same day
 4. Develop a lessons-learned summary from the evaluation and share it with all participants.