



A FRAMEWORK FOR MAJOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

GUIDANCE DOCUMENT 4 A GUIDE TO PLANNING AND STAGING AN EXERCISE



INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDE TO PLANNING AND STAGING EXERCISES

'A Framework for Major Emergency Management' (2006) replaces the *Framework for Co-ordinated Response to Major Emergency*, which has underpinned major emergency preparedness and response capability since 1984.

The Framework sets out the arrangements, by which the principal response agencies will work together in the management of large-scale incidents.

This *Guide to Planning and Staging Exercises* is intended to support the Framework and provide guidance on running internal and joint / inter agency exercise programmes.

This document is presented as a working draft and as such it is requested that comments and insights that arise during the implementation of this guidance are feed back to the national level. Comments should be addressed to:

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INTRODUCTION

Exercises should be seen as an integral part of major emergency management. The aim of planning and staging exercises is to test and enhance the overall capability of an organisation to respond as well as validating plans, systems and procedures. Exercises raise awareness, educate individuals on their roles, the roles of others and promote coordination and cooperation.

Preparation and practice for response and recovery from emergencies or disasters enhances the ability of the principal emergency response services to protect people, property, and the environment. Exercises identify areas that are proficient and those that need improvement. Lessons learned from exercises can be used to revise operational plans and provide a basis for training. Well-designed and executed exercises are the most effective means of:

- Testing and validating policies, plans, procedures, training, equipment and interagency arrangements;
- Training personnel and clarifying roles and responsibilities;
- Improving interagency coordination and communications;
- Identifying gaps in resources;
- Improving individual performance;
- Identifying opportunities for improvement;
- Building confidence
- Gaining public recognition of the major emergency management regime
- Providing an opportunity for discussion and feedback

The purpose of an emergency exercise is to simulate some or all of the elements of a real life emergency. The quality of an exercise does not depend upon size / scale – the crucial aspect is the selection of the exercise objectives and the extent to which the exercise is organised, run and used to improve the emergency management process.

The framework requirement is that:

Each principal response agency should have an internal exercise programme on a three-year cycle with clearly defined and progressive objectives in place to validate its preparedness for responding to major emergencies.

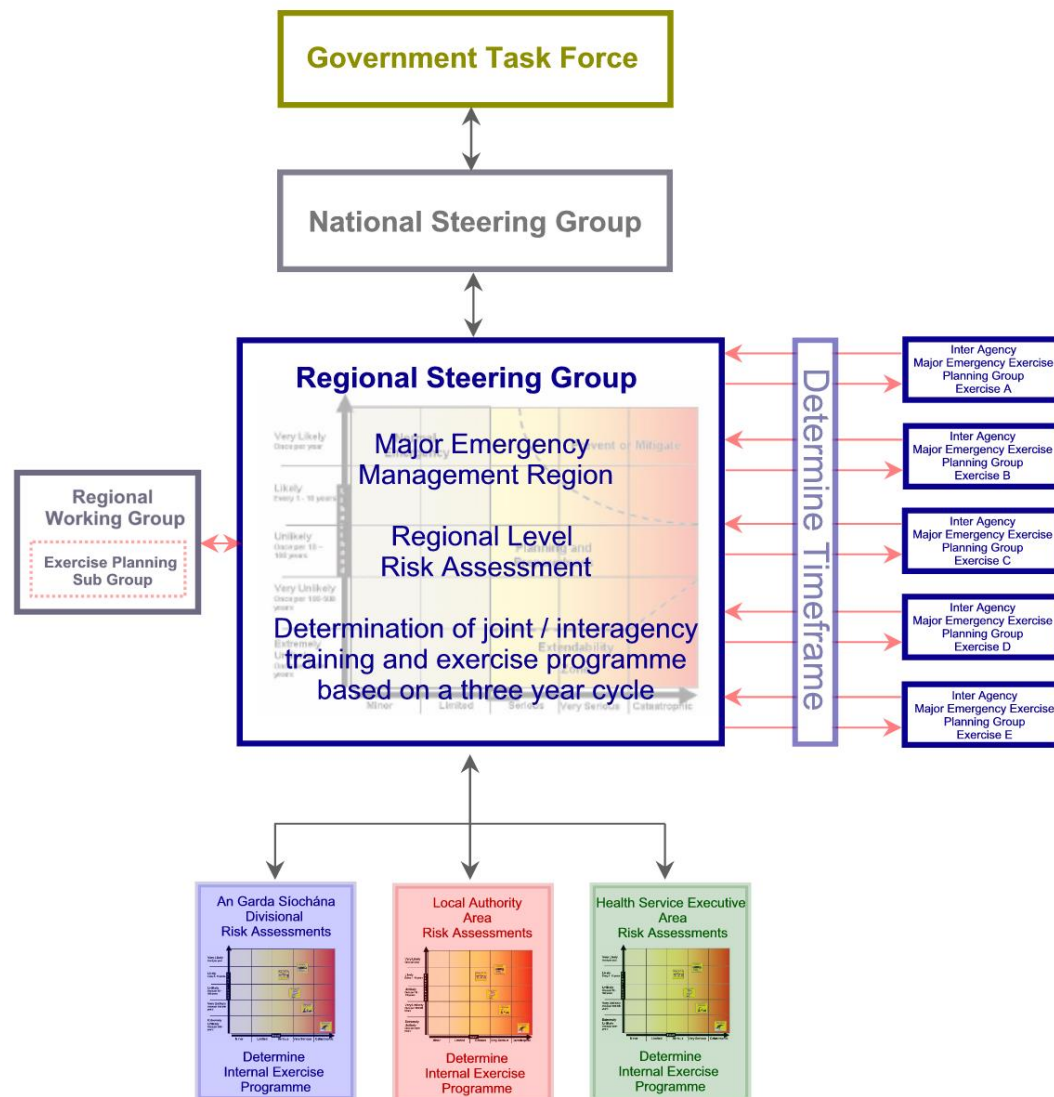
Each principal response agency should participate in developing and running joint / inter-agency training and exercise programmes with its partner agencies in the Major Emergency Region and a co-ordinated programme which dove-tails with the internal programme referred to above should be prepared and agreed on a three year cycle

This purpose of this guide is to provide common guidance for running exercise programmes required under the Framework document.

Determination of internal and joint / interagency exercise programmes

In the context of planning and staging exercises the framework requires that each principal response agency carry out a risk assessment in accordance with the guide to risk assessment in Major Emergency Management. This guide recommends that the risk assessment process is carried out initially by each principal response agency, before being undertaken and documented by an inter-agency team, working under the aegis of the Regional Steering Group on Major Emergency Management.

Figure 1



It is envisaged that each Agency's risk assessment will determine the internal exercise program of that agency. The Regional Steering Group will be guided in their determination of the joint / interagency exercise programme (based on a three year cycle) by the regional level risk assessment.

It should be the aim of any exercise programme to build capabilities suitable for a wide range of threats and hazards identified in the risk assessment, gradually increasing in difficulty and complexity, while also working within a budget that necessitates prioritisation and choice.

Regional Working Group

The Framework provides that Regional Working Groups will be formed to support the Regional Steering Group and to undertake the functions assigned at regional level. The development and maintenance of the joint / inter agency exercise programme based on a three year cycle is very onerous task and will require people from each agency to devote a considerable amount of time and energy. To ensure that this work is carried out effectively a standing sub group with representation from each of the Principal Response Agencies should be established within the Regional Working Group structure. This sub group should ensure that the joint / inter agency exercise programme required under the Framework is developed and maintained over the three year rolling cycle reporting back to the Regional Steering Group as required.

Third Party Exercises

Third party organisations sometimes wish to have the principal response agencies participate in their emergency exercises. These can present an opportunity for the principal response agencies to benefit, but on other occasions they can be a burden on scarce resources. There will be little potential return to the principal response agencies where the development of the exercise objectives does not include their input. In particular, exercises which are set up by third parties to test the “turnout” of the principal emergency services or primarily for their public relations purposes will contribute little to the development of capacity. While principal response agencies will generally want to assist, exercises with third parties should, in general, be factored in as part of the exercise programme determined by the Regional Steering Group. Contact at the earliest opportunity is essential, and principal response agencies should ensure that they have significant input to determining the exercise objectives, in return for their involvement.

Annual Report to Government

The Government Task Force on Emergency Planning has stressed the importance attached to departments and public authorities having Structured Exercise Programmes in place. Departments and public authorities are required to submit details of their structured Exercise Programmes on an annual basis to form part of the Annual Report to Government on Emergency

Planning. Any programme identified is required to be submitted on the following template:

Table 1

Structured Exercise Programme					
Exercise Type	Proposed Date of Exercise	Location	Agencies Involved	Numbers Involved (approx)	Purpose of Exercise

Each Regional Steering Group should arrange for the submission of a joint / interagency structured exercise programme on an annual basis on the above template stemming from the regional exercise programme (based on a three year cycle) identified and agreed by the group. The National Steering Group will report all structured exercise programmes identified in each of the Major Emergency Management Regions to the Government Task Force.

Budget

The amount of expense incurred in planning, running and reviewing exercises will be dependent on the type, location, timing and duration. The framework requirement is that:

Each principal response agency should provide a budget for major emergency preparedness, which reflects the expenditure required to meet the costs of implementing the agency's internal preparedness, as well as the agency's contribution to the regional level inter-agency preparedness.

This requires a collaborative approach that integrates the capabilities and resources of various Principal Response Agencies, organisations and individuals from both the public and private sectors in order to achieve joint / inter-agency exercise objectives.

PLANNING AN EXERCISE

Exercises should be regarded as an integral part of the emergency management process. It is important that emergency plans have been prepared and appropriate staff trained in their roles before an exercise is planned. In planning an exercise consideration will need to be given to some or all of the following points:

- Aim which is the purpose, scope or objectives of the exercise
- Background or a basic scenario (consistent with exercise location)
- Documentation (exercise plan, control plan, evaluation sheets)
- Duration of the exercise
- Date and time of exercise
- Exercise organisation (e.g., director, directing staff, evaluators, participants)
- Roles and responsibilities of the main participants
- Rules of how the exercise should be conducted
- Health & Safety issues (e.g. action in the event of a real emergency, safety officers responsibilities, prohibited activities)
- Logistics (e.g., parking, assembly area, transportation, restrooms, food/water)
- Security and access (e.g., identification / badges)
- Communications (e.g. radio frequencies / channels)
- Schedule of events (e.g. briefings, start and end of exercise)
- Maps and directions
- Media Management
- Evaluation

If an exercise is to run smoothly and achieve its objectives it will require detailed pre-planning and considerable coordination among participating agencies. In the case of large and / or complex exercises, a rehearsal of the set up of the principal participants might be considered. The amount of planning for even small events should not be underestimated.

TYPES OF EXERCISES

There are different types of exercise ranging from the simple to full-scale on the ground simulations. The latter should only be undertaken as the culmination of a programme of simpler and more easily organised exercises. The following are three of the most frequently employed exercise methods:

Workshops

Workshops can be pitched at different levels depending on the needs. They can be used to familiarise new personnel with the procedures of the organisation or they can be designed to engage senior managers in a problem identification exercise.

Workshops are aimed at:

- Collecting or sharing information
- Obtaining new or different perspectives
- Testing new ideas, processes, or procedures
- Training groups in coordinated activities
- Problem solving of complex issues
- Obtaining consensus
- Team building

Tabletop Exercises

A tabletop exercise is a planned activity in which principal response agencies and organisations with emergency management responsibilities are presented with simulated emergency situations. These exercises use maps, photographs, plans models or written scenarios to simulate the scene and environs of an emergency. They are a cost effective and flexible means of testing plans, procedures and people. Tabletop exercises can be used for a single organisation or with a multi-disciplinary response in mind. Multi-disciplinary exercises facilitate inter agency understanding and allow key personnel in the Principle Response Agencies to meet. The chosen venue for a tabletop exercise should be of sufficient size to accommodate the props (model, maps etc.) and all the attending personnel. Ancillary rooms should be considered if the exercise objectives involve testing communication with off-site groups.

Tabletop exercise methods can be divided into two categories: **basic** and **advanced**.

In a basic tabletop exercise, the scene set by the scenario remains constant. It describes an event or emergency incident and brings discussion / participants up to the simulated present time. Participants apply their knowledge and skills to a list of problems presented by the exercise controller, problems are discussed as a group, and resolution is generally agreed on and summarised by the chairman.

In an advanced tabletop exercise, play revolves around delivery of pre-scripted messages to players that alter the original scenario as the exercise progresses. The exercise controller usually introduces problems one at a time in the form of a written message, simulated telephone call, video, e-mail or other means. Participants discuss the issues raised by the problem, using appropriate plans and procedures.

Tabletop exercises may include:

- Practicing group problem solving
- Familiarising managers and senior officials with potential situations
- Conducting a specific case study based on lessons learned
- Examining the effect of contingencies on personnel resources
- Testing group message interpretation
- Participating in information sharing
- Assessing coordination between the various agencies
- Achieving limited or specific objectives

Live Exercises

Live exercises can range from the small scale, where one element of an organisation's response is tested, to a full scale inter disciplinary simulation. Live exercises are particularly useful for testing communication and information management. This type of exercise requires a significant planning input and is likely to impact on normal services.

Selection of a suitable site is crucial to the success of a live exercise. When choosing a site the exercise objectives, vehicular access and the health and safety of responding personnel are all important considerations. Permission to use the site should be obtained in advance and advice provided to the owner that the site would not be accessible during the exercise.

Conducting a Live Exercise is the most complex step in the exercise cycle. Live exercises test many facets of the emergency response and should focus on implementing and analysing plans, systems and procedures, developed in earlier discussion-based exercises. A Live exercise should be controlled by the exercise directing staff. Directing staff control the events through a scripted exercise scenario but with built-in flexibility to allow updates to drive activity. It is conducted in a real-time, stressful environment that closely mirrors a real event.

Responders and resources are mobilised and deployed to the scene where they conduct their actions as if a real incident had occurred (with minor exceptions). The Live Exercise should endeavour to simulate the reality of operations in multiple functional areas by presenting complex and realistic problems requiring critical thinking, rapid problem solving, and effective responses by trained personnel in a highly stressful environment.

Agencies that are not involved in the exercise, but who could be involved in an actual event, could have non-participating observers.

The directing staff may also act as evaluators, observe behaviours and compare them against established plans, policies, procedures, and standard practices (if applicable). They also ensure that all activity is executed within a safe environment and that health and safety requirements are fully met.

Each of the three activities described plays an important part in the overall exercise program. The following chart lists some of the reasons for conducting each type of activity:

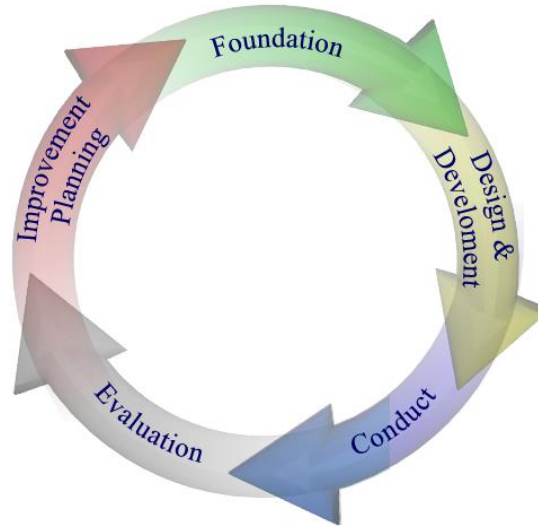
Table 2

Reasons to Conduct Exercise Program Activities		
Workshops	Tabletop Exercises	Live Exercises
No previous exercises	Practice group problem solving	Assess and improve information analysis
No recent major Emergencies	Promote familiarity with the Major Emergency Plan	Assess and improve interagency coordination / cooperation
New Plan	Assess plan coverage for a specific risk	Support policy formulation
New Procedures	Assess interagency / interdepartmental coordination	Test resource and personnel allocation
New Staff, Leadership	Observe information sharing	Assess personnel and equipment.
New Facility		Assess Media Management
New Risk / Threat		

EXERCISE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Exercise project management involves five stages, which are collectively known as the exercise cycle. The five stages of the exercise cycle are as follows:

Figure 2



1. **Foundation**
2. **Design & Development**
3. **Conduct**
4. **Evaluation**
5. **Improvement Planning**

FOUNDATION

The following activities must be accomplished to provide the foundation for an effective exercise:

- Assess capability to conduct an exercise
- Gather necessary support for participation
- Define the exercise scope
- Develop a project timeline – establish milestones
- Establish an exercise planning group
- Develop an exercise work plan

The support required to conduct any inter agency exercise should be established by the Regional Steering Group on Major Emergency Management stemming from the three year exercise cycle. The type, scope and aims of the exercise should be consistent with the Regions overall strategy to build capabilities suitable for a wide range of threats and hazards identified in the risk assessment. When it has been agreed to conduct an exercise the Regional Steering Group should ensure the following:

- Establish an exercise planning group
- Determine timeframe for the exercise

Exercise Planning Group

An exercise planning group should be established by the Regional Steering Group for each exercise. It is important that each participating agency nominate members onto this group. All agencies who have a role to play in the exercise should be invited to take part. The exercise planning group is responsible for designing, developing, conducting, and evaluating all aspects of an exercise. The planning group determines exercise design objectives, tailors the scenario to local needs, develops documentation used in exercise evaluation, control, and simulation. Planning group members may also assist with developing and distributing pre-exercise materials, conducting exercise briefings and training sessions.

The exercise planning group should be chaired, where possible, by an Exercise Director who is a nominated member of staff from the agency that is chairing the Regional Steering Group or the pre-determined lead agency for the exercise as outlined in the Framework for Major Emergency Management. The Director should work with the assistance of the planning group formed from representatives of each of the participating agencies. The Exercise Director will be in overall charge of planning, exercising and debriefing. It falls to the Director to control the exercise tempo and ensure continuity from one phase to the next including early termination for safety / other reasons. Due to this high level of involvement, planning group members are ideal selections for directing staff and evaluator positions during the exercise itself.

Exercise Planning Timelines

The exercise planning group should establish a timeline for the planning process. This timeline should identify key planning meetings, critical responsibilities and activities. The timeline identified should be consistent with overall timeframe stipulated by the Regional Steering Group. It is recognised that timelines will vary based on exercise scope and complexity. The planning process may be aided by the development of an exercise work plan.

DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

Building on the exercise foundation, the design and development process focuses on:

- Identifying objectives
- Developing the scenario - major and minor events
- Creating documentation
- Coordinating third party involvement

The extent of work and time required will depend on the complexity of the exercise planned.

Exercise Objectives

The first step of an exercise involves deciding its aims along with setting clear objectives and outcomes. Early agreement on these issues will ensure that the appropriate type of exercise is selected and suitable monitoring methods can be devised. For initial exercises it is recommended that objectives be kept simple, clear and limited.

Exercises can occur within individual organisations or on an inter-agency basis. When conjoint exercises are planned the senior management of all participating agencies should agree the overall aim of the exercise. The specific objectives for each agency can be set individually but should be submitted centrally to ensure that they do not conflict with those of another service. Broad participation from all stakeholders is important for ensuring that training and exercises meet a wide range of preparedness needs.

Exercise Scenario

A suitable scenario should be developed based on the agreed aims, objectives and outcomes. Scenarios are used to enliven or focus an exercise. The scenario should not take over the exercise it is just a means to an end. The scenario selected should compliment the main aim of the exercise. Unlikely or unusual hypothetical incidents should be avoided. Scenarios which fit with local geography and which could reasonably happen add a degree of realism which, in turn, should add to the interest in and credibility of, the exercise.

A scenario provides the backdrop and storyline that drive an exercise. The first step in designing the scenario is determining the type of threat / hazard. Each type of hazard presents its own strengths and weaknesses for evaluating different aspects of prevention, response, and recovery, and is applicable to different exercise objectives.

The next step is to determine the venue (facility or site) that the scenario will affect. A balance has to be achieved between exercising in the area

that the problem is likely to affect and letting day-to-day commercial activity carry on as normal. Exercises outside of normal working hours have a number of advantages that need to be considered.

Exercise Timing

A decision that has to be made at an early stage is whether the exercise is to run in real time or whether the scenario will unfold in a series of vignettes corresponding to stages along a timeline. A further consideration is whether the exercise time will be stopped at any point during the exercise to allow for review or consideration of variables e.g. weather, time of day or year.

Exercise Location

Whatever type of exercise is to be held the planning group should visit the location – at a similar time / day as the exercise – to ensure that it is appropriate. Written permission should be sought where necessary and any potential users notified that it may be out of bounds on a certain date.

CONDUCT

After design and development steps are complete, the exercise takes place. Exercise conduct steps include set-up, briefings, facilitation / directing / evaluation and wrap-up activities associated with the exercise.

Exercise Control Centre

The requirement for an exercise control centre should be considered by the exercise planning group. The need for such a control centre arises mainly for live exercises. It should be, where possible a suitable building close to the exercise site which can then be used as an assembly point for the exercise director, directing staff, observers etc.. It may also be used for briefings and where casualties, if used, can be prepared. Car-parking facilities need to be considered. If the exercise control centre is further than walking distance from the site then the provision of transport should also be considered.

Health & Safety

The safety of personnel during the exercise is of paramount importance. In live exercises, all participants – including directing staff, umpires, volunteers and observers- should be made aware of any hazards within the area and reminded of safety issues. Exercise participants may not be familiar with the location and control may be needed to ensure that they are kept within the confines of the exercise area.

A Safety Officer should be appointed and a risk assessment carried out for every live exercise to ensure that structures are safe and no unseen dangers are present on the site. All participants should comply with the safety requirements and not place themselves, or others, in danger. At complex exercises, or where conditions are particularly hazardous, each participating agency may need its own safety officer. The exercise cannot be seen as a reason not to comply with health and safety requirements. The Safety Officer should be easily identifiable and have the authority to intervene, as they feel necessary, to ensure the health and safety of personnel.

First aid / Ambulance cover should be provided to deal with any health problems or injuries sustained during the exercise. For safety reasons, directing staff should adopt an agreed procedure for intervention into the exercise, including cessation where necessary. The exercise planning group should devise a codeword for this purpose and the means of relaying it to those participants without radio communication.

Welfare

Consideration should be given to welfare arrangements during exercises. Welfare needs may vary depending on the type, timing and duration of the exercise. The provision of refreshments, changing, washing and toilet facilities before, during and after the event will also need to be considered. The use of casualties adds realism to exercises but their welfare needs to be taken into account. Exercise casualties should not be placed in or near unsuitable conditions e.g. cold, wet or hard surfaces without appropriate care. Invariably the length of time envisaged for the activity turns out to be much longer. An area which is warm and dry should be available.

Identification

Exercise participants should wear that identification that would be normal in a real emergency. To avoid confusion, all those who are not actively participating in the exercise scenario e.g. the exercise director, directing staff, umpires, observers, should be easily distinguishable. Tabards with clear markings are usually the best option for a live exercise. It is important in all types of exercise to be able to identify which agency each person represents by uniform or badge.

Public Information

The exercise planning group should agree whether there should be any prior publicity. It may be advisable to issue prior public information to members of the public in the vicinity of the exercise to prevent any undue alarm, particularly for exercises at hazardous sites. All reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that the public does not perceive any live exercise as a real event.

Briefing

A full briefing should be provided for all exercise participants. Each agency should take responsibility for the briefing of their staff. The extent of the briefing will vary in accordance with the exercise type.

Exercises may be given a codename which should then be mandatory as a prefix to all messages – verbal or written – during the exercise. The use of code words will ensure that everyone involved is aware that they are part of the exercise and not a real incident. Control rooms / operation centres of all the participating organisations must be informed about the codename, prior to the exercise. A codeword, which can be used to identify that a real incident has occurred and is not part of the exercise, should be agreed and circulated to all participants prior to the event.

Media

Dealing with the media has become a significant aspect of any major incident and as such every opportunity should be taken to practice the media plan. Exercise press conferences can be used to test media skills and information management. Provision should always be made at the planning stage of any large exercises for the 'unplanned' arrival of the media to cover the exercise.

Debriefing

Debriefing is a crucial stage of any exercise and properly conducted provides a forum to evaluate efficiency, learn from the experience gained and inform the emergency management process.

A 'Hot-Debrief' immediately after the exercise is a good way of capturing participant's instant reactions. A 'Cold-Debrief' follows some time after the event when participants have had time to reflect on their experiences.

Debriefings should take place both at an individual service level and at the inter-agency level. The exercise director and directing staff should ensure that the necessary debriefs take place. All participant organisations, including the voluntary sector and any private sector involvement, should be represented at the inter-agency debriefing.

EVALUATION

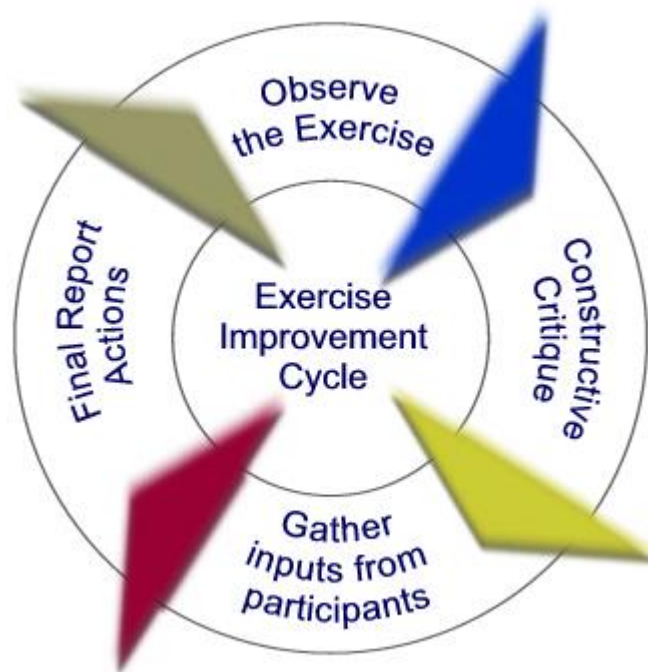
Just as important as designing the exercise, evaluating the results will determine if the objectives were met.

- Are there improvements needed in plans, systems and procedures?
- Do the major emergency management arrangements work as planned?
- Is there training that needs to be addressed?

Evaluation is the cornerstone of exercises. Exercises can potentially be both expensive and disruptive so there is a need to ensure that maximum benefit is obtained for the effort involved. The quality of evaluation and identification of learning points is crucial.

Exercises that result in no improvements are at best limited to good experience for the participants. Exercises are costly in time and resources and best possible use should be made of them. Lessons learned at one exercise should produce benefits for all stakeholders on a wider scale.

Figure 3



As an exercise is underway a process should be in place to observe the exercise and this should be followed by a constructive critique of the events as they occurred. The participants must have the opportunity to comment on the exercise from their point of view. The results should be collated in the Final Report and communicated to all concerned through the National Steering Group.

IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Evaluation and improvement planning are fundamentally linked. Improvement planning is a process by which concrete improvement actions that address issues observed during an exercise are developed, assigned, implemented and tracked.

It is critically important that the Exercise Planning Group (through the Regional Steering Group) ensures that all learning points / action items are agreed by each of the participating Principal Response Agencies. The action items identified should be documented in the final report and a time frame agreed for implementation. This process should be monitored by each of the Principal Response Agencies and results validated during subsequent exercises.

It is through this cycle of continuous improvement that exercises prepare Principal Response Agencies for all hazards. Without effective evaluation and improvement planning, these benefits could not be realised.

The following questions provide a guide for developing actions items:

- What changes need to be made to plans and procedures to improve performance?
- What changes need to be made to each Principal Response Agencies organisational structures to improve performance?
- What changes need to be made to leadership, coordination and management processes to improve performance?
- What training is needed to improve performance?
- What changes to (or additional) equipment is needed to improve performance?
- What lessons can be learned that will direct how to approach a similar problem in the future?

KEY ROLES

Exercise Director

The Exercise Director is the person in overall charge of planning, exercising, debriefing and producing the final report. It falls to the Director to control the exercise tempo and ensure continuity from one phase to the next including early termination for safety / other reasons e.g. a major incident requiring real action by participants.

Directing Staff

Directing staff play a role in both tabletop and live exercises. They have access to the whole exercise programme and ensure that it proceeds according to plan. Intervention should be minimal and a last resort however intervention should occur when there is confusion about the scenario, a problem is out of the control of the participants or failure to do so compromises the exercise objectives.

Observers

An Observer is someone who has no role to play in the exercise but is witnessing the events either to assess the preparations of the organisation or individuals within it, or to learn lessons. Each agency will be responsible for inviting its own observers. However for large inter-agency exercises it may be necessary to limit the numbers of observers from each agency. The establishment of a viewing area should be considered. This will also assist in ensuring their safety. A quality briefing for observers is essential prior to and during the exercise. Directing staff should be available to explain events and procedures as the exercise unfolds. Observers may not be invited to the debriefing, but their views should always be sought. This may be achieved through the use of exercise evaluation forms or requesting written comments to be forwarded to the planning group.

Umpires

Umpires watch and listen to the exercise with the particular brief of measuring whether activities are happening in the right place, at the right time and involving the right people. An umpire should be assigned to each of the key players in the exercise. If possible the umpire should be chosen from those persons who are listed in an organisation's plan as alternates for the role they are to observe. Umpires should be thoroughly briefed before the exercise and be tasked with making observations on whether the exercise objectives are met. Their role in subsequent debriefings is crucial.

EXERCISE DOCUMENTATION

The list below briefly describes typical exercise documentation requirements:

- a. A **situation statement** is a guide to the exercise. It need not be more than a few pages. It provides background information on the exercise scope, schedule, and objectives. It also presents the scenario narrative that will drive participant discussions during the exercise.
- b. An **Exercise Plan**, typically used for operations-based exercises, provides an exercise synopsis and is distributed prior to the start of the exercise. In addition to addressing exercise objectives and scope, the plan assigns tasks and responsibilities for a successful outcome. The plan should not contain detailed scenario information and is generally intended for exercise participants and observers.

The Exercise Plan should provide the following:

- Purpose of the exercise
- General objectives
- Overall exercise strategy
- Exercise Planning Group structure
- Agencies involved - tasks and responsibilities
- Safety and security (in general terms)
- Exercise type and basic information
- Basic administrative and/or logistical support

- c. The **Exercise Control Plan**, contains more detailed information about the exercise scenario and describes the directing staff roles and responsibilities. As the directing staff notes contain information on the scenario and exercise administration, it should only be distributed to those individuals specifically designated as directing staff and evaluators.

The Exercise Control Plan should provide the following:

- General objectives
- Concept of play (exercise scope, scenario narrative, location of players)
- Specific functional objectives
- Procedures, responsibilities, assignments and support
- Exercise Planning Group structure
- Exercise timelines (including pre- and post exercise activities)
- Emergency call-off procedures, safety and security
- Artificialities, assumptions and simulations
- Master scenario of events list for the exercise
- Communications capabilities, structure and procedures
- Checklists or any other job aids needed (including maps, reference etc)

- d. **Evaluation Sheets** should be developed for use by the Directing Staff and evaluators to evaluate the exercise and to produce a final exercise report. The main point of any exercise report needs to focus is whether the main aim of exercise was achieved.

Final Exercise Report

A major multi-agency exercise can be both costly and time consuming to arrange and undertake. A final exercise report should be compiled in all cases as soon as practical after the debrief. The exercise director should ensure that the final report is completed as it is a means of ensuring that lessons learned can be used to provide feedback to participating organisations on their performance during the exercise. The report should contain the aims, objectives and planned outcomes of the exercise along with an outline of the scenario and the planning process. The report should also contain an evaluation section in which the positive and negative observations are recorded and recommendations made. Improvements required should also be agreed and documented in order to assist in converting lessons learned from the exercise into concrete, measurable steps that result in improved response capabilities. This report should be used as a basis for the revision of plans / procedures and determining training needs.

The completed report should be submitted to the relevant Regional Steering Group for onward transmission to the National Steering Group.

EXERCISE CHECK LIST

1. Assemble an Inter Agency Exercise Planning Team and agree the objectives, scenario, extent and aim of the exercise.
2. Develop the key actions and timetable of events including set-up, briefings, facilitation, directing, evaluation and wrap-up activities.
3. Determine and confirm availability / participation of other agencies such as the media / voluntary emergency services / private sector.
4. List facilities required for the exercise and confirm their availability e.g. transport, buildings, equipment.
5. Ensure that all communications to be used during the exercise have been tested at some stage prior to the exercise.
6. Ensure that exercise participants are clearly identifiable and all those who are not actively participating in the exercise scenario e.g. the exercise director, directing staff, umpires, are easily distinguishable.
7. Ensure that directing staff are properly briefed and where required have good independent communications with the Exercise Control Centre.
8. If the exercise links a number of activities or functions which are dependent on each other, confirm that each has been individually tested beforehand.
9. Ensure that all participants have been briefed.
10. Ensure that all participants are aware of the procedures to be followed if a real emergency occurs during the exercise.
11. Ensure that observers, including the media, are clearly identified and properly marshalled. Arrange for them to be kept informed of the progress of the exercise. Ensure their safety.
12. For longer exercises arrange for appropriate catering and toilet facilities.
13. Warn the local media, emergency services control centres and any neighbours who might be worried or affected by the exercise.
14. Ensure that senior management, directing staff, umpires and key players are aware of the time and location for the "hot" debrief and circulate a timetable for a full debrief.
15. Ensure that the final report is completed to ensure that lessons learned can be used to provide feedback to participating organisations.