

# Managing Exercises



Australian Institute for  
Disaster Resilience

Cover images, clockwise from top:  
State-wide briefing at the State Control Centre, Victoria, CFA;  
SES volunteer on a training exercise, SES;  
An Australian Red Cross volunteer sits with a girl during a relief centre exercise, Australian Red Cross.

AUSTRALIAN DISASTER RESILIENCE  
HANDBOOK COLLECTION

# Managing Exercises

Handbook 3



**Australian Government**  
**Attorney-General's Department**

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# History of the Australian National Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection

The first publications in the original Australian Emergency Manual Series were primarily skills reference manuals produced from 1989 onwards. In August 1996, on advice from the National Emergency Management Principles and Practice Advisory Group, the Series was expanded to include a more comprehensive range of emergency management principles and practice reference publications.

In 2011, Handbooks were introduced to better align the Series with the *National Strategy for Disaster Resilience*. Compiled by practitioners with management and service-delivery experience in a range of disaster events, the handbooks comprised principles, strategies and actions to help the management and delivery of support services in a disaster context.

In 2015, the Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) was appointed custodian of the handbooks and manuals in the series. Now known as the Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection, AIDR continues to provide guidance on the national principles and practices in disaster resilience in Australia through management and publication of the Collection.

The Handbook Collection is developed and reviewed by national consultative committees representing a range of state and territory agencies, governments, organisations and individuals involved in disaster resilience. The Collection is sponsored by the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department.

Access to the Collection and further details are available at [www.knowledge.aidr.org.au](http://www.knowledge.aidr.org.au).

## Australian National Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection (2011 – )

**Handbook 1** Disaster health

**Handbook 2** Community recovery

**Handbook 3** Managing exercises

**Handbook 4** Evacuation planning

**Handbook 5** Communicating with people with a disability – National Guidelines for Emergency Managers

**Handbook 6** National Strategy for Disaster Resilience – community engagement framework

**Handbook 7** Managing the floodplain: a guide to best practice in flood risk management in Australia

**Guideline 7-1** Guideline for using the national generic brief for flood investigations to develop project specific specifications

**Guideline 7-2** Technical Flood Risk Management Guideline: flood emergency response classification of the floodplain

**Guideline 7-3** Technical flood risk management guideline: flood hazard

**Template 7-4** Technical project brief template

**Guideline 7-5** Technical Flood Risk Management Guideline - flood information to support land-use planning

**Guideline 7-6** Technical flood risk management guideline: assessing options and service levels for treating existing risk

**Practice Note 7-7** Considering flooding in land-use planning activities

**Handbook 8** Lessons management

**Handbook 9** Australian Emergency Management Arrangements

**Handbook 10** National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines (*plus supporting guideline*)

**Guideline 10-1** National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines: practice guide

**Handbook 11** *renamed Guideline 10-1 National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines: practice guide*

**Handbook 12** *Spontaneous volunteer management*

## Australian Emergency Management Manual Series

The most recent list of publications in the Manuals series includes 46 titles.

The manuals have not been reviewed since 2011 or earlier and the Manual Series is undergoing a review which will see relevant Manuals move into the Handbook Collection. Current and past editions of the Manuals will remain available on the AIDR Knowledge Hub at [www.knowledge.aidr.org.au](http://www.knowledge.aidr.org.au).

### Manual Series Catalogue: 2004 - 2011

**Manual 1** Emergency management concepts and principles (2004)

**Manual 2** *Australian Emergency Management Arrangements (superseded by Handbook 9)*

**Manual 3** Australian Emergency Management Glossary (1998)

**Manual 4** Australian Emergency Management Terms Thesaurus (1998)

**Manual 5** *Emergency risk management – applications guide (superseded by Handbook 10)*

**Manual 6** *Implementing emergency risk management – a facilitator’s guide to working with committees and communities (superseded by Handbook 10)*

**Manual 7** Planning safer communities – land use planning for natural hazards (2002, currently under review)

**Manual 8** *Emergency catering (2003, archived)*

**Manual 12** Safe and healthy mass gatherings (1999)

**Manual 13** Health aspects of chemical, biological and radiological hazards (2000)

**Manual 14** Post disaster survey and assessment (2001)

**Manual 15** Community emergency planning (1992)

**Manual 16** Urban search and rescue – capability guidelines for structural collapse (2002)

**Manual 17** Multi-agency incident management (replaced by AIIMS)

**Manual 18** Community and personal support services (1998)

**Manual 19** *Managing the floodplain (superseded by Handbook 7)*

**Manual 20** Flood preparedness (2009)

**Manual 21** Flood warning (2009)

**Manual 22** Flood response (2009)

**Manual 23** Emergency management planning for floods affected by dams (2009)

**Manual 24** Reducing the community impact of landslides (2001)

**Manual 25** Guidelines for psychological services: emergency managers guide (2003)

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- Manual 26** Guidelines for psychological services: mental health practitioners guide (2003)
  - Manual 27** Disaster loss assessment guidelines (2002)
  - Manual 28** Economic and financial aspects of disaster recovery (2002)
  - Manual 29** Community development in recovery from disaster (2003)
  - Manual 30** Storm and water damage operations (2007) (information may not be appropriate to all situations)
  - Manual 31** Operations centre management (2001)
  - Manual 32** Leadership (1997)
  - Manual 33** National Land search operations (2014) (refer to the Land Search Operations Manual website)
  - Manual 34** Road rescue (2009)
  - Manual 35** General and disaster rescue (2006)
  - Manual 36** Map reading and navigation (2001)
  - Manual 37** Four-wheel-drive vehicle operation (1997)
  - Manual 38** Communications (1998)
  - Manual 39** Flood rescue boat operation (2009)
  - Manual 40** Vertical Rescue (2001)
  - Manual 41** *Small group training management (1999, archived)*
  - Manual 42** *Managing Exercises (superseded by Handbook 3)*
  - Manual 43** Emergency planning (2004)
  - Manual 44** Guidelines for emergency management in culturally and linguistically diverse communities (2007)
  - Manual 45** Guidelines for the development of community education, awareness and education programs (2010)
  - Manual 46** Tsunami (2010)

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# Acknowledgements

The Australian exercise management community acknowledges the work done by the United States Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Preparedness Directorate as part of the Department of Homeland Security.

Many of the exercise management principles espoused in this handbook are based upon those found in the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) which can be accessed at [https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1914-25045-8890/hseep\\_apr13\\_.pdf](https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1914-25045-8890/hseep_apr13_.pdf)



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# Preface

The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidelines and a national reference for the design, planning, conduct and evaluation of exercises. It will help to develop exercises across the national security environment.

The first edition of this handbook was published in 2001 and was developed by a steering committee consisting mainly of emergency services personnel. Over the intervening years many more stakeholders have become involved in the conduct of exercises, from the health to counter terrorism sectors.

The steering committee involved in this revision was coordinated by the Attorney-General's Department, and consisted of representatives from a cross section of organisations and jurisdictions. The principles and concepts outlined in this handbook have been brought together from agencies in the emergency management and counter terrorism sectors to produce an all-hazards framework for exercises.

The concepts and principles contained in this handbook are also incorporated in an exercise management unit within the Public Safety Training Package, a competency based qualification. It is recommended that those planning to conduct exercises avail themselves of accredited training in this area to ensure best practice.

Some goals of this handbook are:

- to provide a shared understanding of key concepts, principles and frameworks used in Australia
- to provide national consistency in the terminology, management structures and documentation used in exercise management throughout Australia, and
- to provide resources that improve the quality of exercises.

Exercising is integral to the development of capability, as well as to the preparation of personnel to carry out their functions during actual events. This handbook is designed to offer a series of checklists and prompts for exercise managers and provides a number of examples to illustrate different aspects of the exercise management process.

The formats used in the handbook can be adapted to suit specific organisational or jurisdictional requirements.

Warwick Finn

First Assistant Secretary

National Security Capability Development Division

Attorney-General's Department

This handbook is available on the Australian Disaster Resilience Knowledge Hub ([www.knowledge.aidr.org.au](http://www.knowledge.aidr.org.au)).

This handbook will be updated in soft copy, so any proposed changes or other relevant publications can be brought to the attention of the editor (email [enquiries@aidr.org.au](mailto:enquiries@aidr.org.au)).

# Chapter 1 Introduction

## What is an exercise?

An exercise is a controlled, objective-driven activity used for testing, practising or evaluating processes or capabilities.

An exercise can be as simple as a planning group discussing an emergency plan or as complex as a major multi-agency event involving several organisations and participants.

## Why conduct exercises?

Regardless of size, exercises are useful to:

- evaluate plans
- explore issues
- promote awareness
- develop or assess competence
- demonstrate capability
- practise interoperability
- validate training
- identify gaps
- evaluate equipment, techniques and processes.

## Value of exercises

Exercises are an essential component of preparedness and should be used to enhance capability and contribute to continuous improvement.

The diagram below represents a planning cycle. It begins at the top by identifying a need to plan; for example, a community is located on a floodplain and therefore a risk exists. The community plan for the hazard, conduct training of emergency services and deliver community education. On the outer circle the community is impacted by the hazard and respond to the incident: the response is evaluated and plans, policies and procedures reviewed accordingly. When an exercise is conducted a simulated event is substituted for a real event.

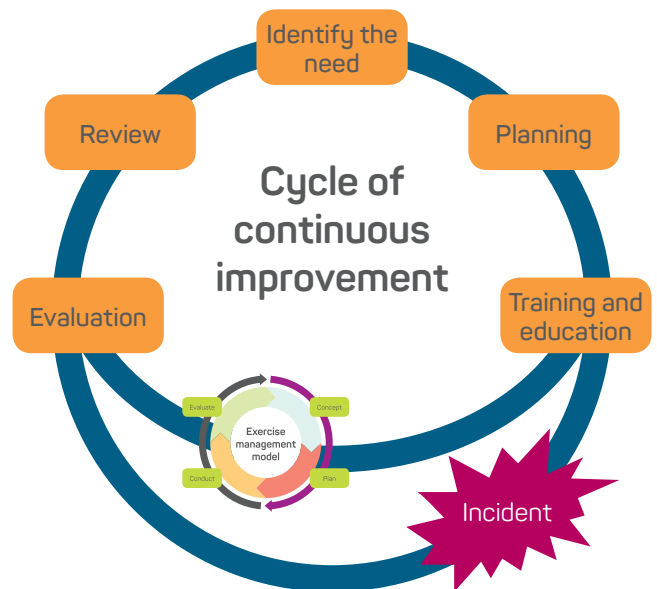
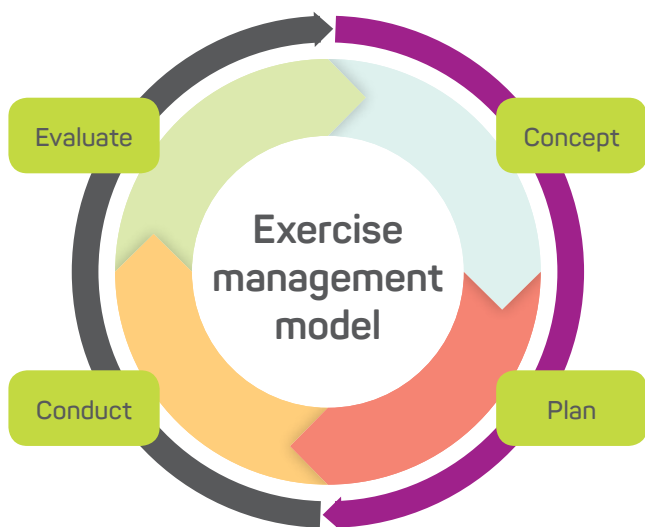


Figure 1.1: Cycle of continuous improvement



**Figure 1.2:** The exercise management model

The success of an exercise depends on whether a structured approach has been adopted. The exercise management model highlights the phases required to design, plan, conduct and evaluate an effective exercise.

## Concept development phase

All exercises begin with the identification and analysis of the exercise need to determine the aim and objectives. This could be to test, evaluate, assess, practise or demonstrate aspects of policy, plans, procedures, systems or training.

Given the aim and objectives, the scope, style and participants are determined.

The concept development phase concludes with the production and approval of an exercise concept document.

## Planning phase

Exercises need to be carefully planned and managed. Even the smallest of exercises requires a coordinated approach to its design, conduct and evaluation. Establishing a planning team and identifying the functions that need to be managed are essential to ensure the success of any exercise.

## Conduct phase

The conduct of the exercise involves detailed coordination by the exercise control (EXCON) staff, which initiates and controls the various stages of the exercise as it unfolds to meet the objectives.

## Evaluation phase

Exercise evaluation should include an analysis of the management of the exercise, as well as the participants' responses to the developing scenario. Evaluation outcomes should contribute to an organisation's learning and improvement.

## Exercise management

Size and complexity will determine the number of people required to plan and conduct the exercise. An exercise manager, or management team, should always be appointed – preferably with an understanding of project management, stakeholder engagement and risk management. One person can manage a small exercise, whereas larger exercises will require a team of appropriately skilled personnel and a governance structure. Exercise management teams should include subject-matter experts that may be sourced from the organisations involved and the local community.

Exercise managers (or management teams) will perform a number of tasks, including:

- developing the aim and objectives
- determining the scope of the exercise
- conducting planning and progress meetings
- preparing documentation
- appointing EXCON staff
- overseeing the conduct of the exercise
- facilitating or overseeing debriefs
- ensuring the exercise is evaluated
- compiling an exercise report
- validating exercise objectives.

Exercises need to be tailored to suit the identified aim and objectives. It may be that a program of exercises and related activities is required to achieve the aim and objectives, rather than one large-scale exercise that tries to do everything.

# Chapter 2 Exercise concept

## Overview (of concept phase)

The concept development phase is crucial to the exercise management process. It will identify and analyse the need for the exercise, as well as ensure the appropriate level of authority to conduct the exercise is secured. Obtaining the appropriate level of authority helps to gain the commitment of all organisations to provide resources during the planning process and the exercise itself.

## Identify the need

Identifying the need for an exercise is simply a matter of providing an answer to the question 'Why conduct an exercise?'

This need may be influenced by:

- past exercise evaluation outcomes
- operational observations and/or lessons
- review or change of arrangements, policy and/or plans
- new equipment, procedures or practices
- personnel requirements (i.e. training, practise and/or assessment)
- legislative or regulatory requirements.

By combining an understanding of the organisation's needs and the potential gaps between the required and actual level of capability, the exercise need can be derived.

Once the need is understood, it may be determined that an exercise is not the most effective and efficient means to achieve it. It may be more appropriate to conduct training or education activities to address capability gaps. These may be combined with or conducted before any exercise.

At this point the exercise aim, objectives and scope should be developed, which provide direction for the subsequent detailed planning, conduct and evaluation of the exercise.

## Exercise aim

The exercise aim is a statement of intent that gives direction to what will or is desired to be achieved by the exercise. The aim statement can be as generic or as specific as required to meet the needs of the exercise.

There should only be one aim for an exercise. A clear aim leads to a series of objectives that will suggest the most appropriate style, size and complexity of the exercise.

The essential components of an exercise aim are 'purpose' and 'context'. For example:

- [purpose]: test the response to a passenger plane crash on the airport
- [context]: in accordance with the airport emergency plan.

The aim should begin with a verb and be positive, clear, concise and achievable. The following table provides a list of commonly used verbs and their application.

**Table 1: Exercise verbs**

Verb	Definition/application
Test	To evaluate the abilities, aptitudes, skills or performance of a capability or aspects of that capability in addressing a task or a challenge or combination of both.
Assess	To determine the value, significance or extent of, or to appraise a capability, plan, process or procedure.
Practise	To improve a capability's performance.
Develop	To grow into a more mature or advanced state a capability, plan, process or procedure.
Review	To exercise in the context of going over a plan, process or procedure with a view to improve it, or ensuring that it is contemporary best practice.
Explore	To examine the potential of a capability, plan, process or procedure.
Validate	To establish the soundness of, or to corroborate a plan, process or procedure.
Demonstrate	To display or exhibit the operation or use of a capability, resource, procedure or process.

## Examples of exercise aim statements include:

*For a single-agency exercise*

**Exercise aim:** Practise the local State Emergency Service unit's response to a severe storm in accordance with unit standard operating procedures.

*For a multi-agency exercise:*

**Exercise aim:** Test the response to a passenger aircraft crash on the airport in accordance with the airport emergency plan.

## Exercise objectives

Exercise objectives are specific statements describing what is to be achieved by individuals, groups or agencies participating in the exercise. While there should only be one exercise aim, there may be many exercise objectives.

Exercise objectives:

- must be set and agreed on very early in the concept development phase
- must be clear and concise
- should be simple (contain a limited number of aspects) and written in commonly understood language
- should not include words such as 'timely', 'effective' and 'efficient' unless those terms can be quantified and measured.

A common approach to writing objectives is the use of the SMART model. This is an acronym for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Task-related. The application of SMART objectives in the exercise management context is:

- Specific emphasises the need to be specific, rather than general. This means the objective is clear and unambiguous, without vagaries or platitudes. To make objectives specific they must state exactly what is expected.
- Measurable emphasises the need for including criteria for measuring progress towards attainment of the objective.
- Achievable emphasises the importance of objectives that are realistic and attainable within the parameters imposed by the exercise.
- Relevant emphasises the importance of making objectives relevant to the exercise aim and the needs of participants.
- Task-related stresses the need for objectives to be based around activities that can be performed by exercise participants and observed by EXCON staff, so that progress can be made towards achieving the objective being measured.



## Examples of objectives using the SMART model are:

*For a single-agency exercise:*

<b>Exercise aim:</b>	Practise the local State Emergency Service unit's response to a severe storm in accordance with unit standard operating procedures.
<b>Exercise objectives:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Practise the establishment of an incident management team (IMT) in accordance with standard operating procedures.</li><li>2. Assess the documentation of the incident action plan (IAP) by the planning cell in accordance with Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS) doctrine.</li><li>3. Practise the delivery of briefings by IMT members to staff.</li></ol>

*For a multi-agency exercise:*

<b>Exercise aim:</b>	Test the response to a passenger aircraft crash on the airport in accordance with the airport emergency plan.
<b>Exercise objectives:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Assess first-responder actions at a multi-agency emergency incident.</li><li>2. Test establishment and management of a forward command post.</li><li>3. Assess the management of large numbers of casualties by the Ambulance Service..</li></ol>

## Standards and performance measures

It is essential that a range of measures be developed that allow the exercise to be evaluated and reported on. These measures should be used by the:

- exercise planning team to design the exercise inputs
- exercise facilitators to guide participants
- exercise evaluators to measure performance during the exercise.

Standards, where they exist, provide evaluators with a benchmark against which to assess performance. These standards may be sourced from agency standard

operating procedures or policies, approved single- or multi-agency plans or doctrines – such as (AIIMS) – or recognised Australian or International Standards. Measures may be developed from these standards as well as existing procedures or protocols. In the absence of standards, the exercise planning team may need to work with the relevant agencies to define the measures to be used to assess performance.

Standards are used to quantify the objectives and reflect aspects of tasks/capabilities that are critical to successful performance. That is, what evidence can be used to support the evaluation?

It can also be useful to break objectives down into smaller component sub-objectives to help evaluators understand the focus areas for evaluation.

## Examples of objectives and sub-objectives are:

### For a single agency exercise

**Exercise aim:**

Practise the local State Emergency Service unit's response to a severe storm in accordance with unit standard operating procedures

**Exercise objectives:**

1. *Practise the establishment of an incident management team (IMT) in accordance with standard operating procedures.*
  - a. Incident management structure is established in accordance with AIIMS.
  - b. Incident controller sets objectives.
  - c. Cells within the structure communicate with each other.
2. *Practise the documentation of the incident action plan (IAP) by the planning cell in accordance with Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System (AIIMS) doctrine.*
  - a. IAP includes a statement of the current situation and predictions of its likely development.
  - b. IAP describes objectives and strategies.
  - c. IAP outlines management structures.
3. *Practise the delivery of briefings by IMT members to staff.*
  - a. A suitable briefing format is used.
  - b. Briefing includes the current situation.
  - c. Briefing includes key safety issues.

### For a multi-agency exercise

**Exercise aim:**

Test the response to a passenger aircraft crash on the airport in accordance with the airport emergency plan.

**Exercise objectives:**

1. *Assess first-responder actions at a multi-agency emergency incident.*
  - a. First-responders assess safety of scene and establish cordon.
  - b. Staging area and control point is established at a suitable location.
  - c. Liaison between agencies is established and maintained.
2. *Evaluate establishment and management of a forward command post.*
  - a. Command post correctly located (safe area, agencies co-located, secure).
  - b. Information managed and displayed.
  - c. Accurate situation reports provided to all levels.
3. *Assess the management of large numbers of casualties by the Ambulance Service.*
  - a. Primary triage sieve initiated in accordance with standard operating procedures.
  - b. First priority-one casualty transferred to the casualty clearing post within 10 minutes of access.
  - c. All live priority-one patients transported from the casualty clearing post within two hours.

## Scope

The exercise scope describes the boundaries in which the exercise will be conducted.

Defining the scope of the exercise should identify what is to be included, as well as what is not to be included in the exercise.

There is often pressure from outside influences to amend or add to the aim, objectives and/or scope as the exercise planning evolves. This is known as 'scope creep' and should be avoided.

The exercise scope should:

- be broad enough to achieve the objectives
- consider the level of commitment of key participating agencies, inclusive of the
  - private sector
  - not be beyond the capability of participants (test but do not break)
  - consider the level of involvement of participants (first response only, up to an incident control centre, or district/regional or state coordination centre).

## Examples of exercise scope statements:

*For a single-agency exercise:*

- The scope of this exercise includes existing members of the local unit of the State Emergency Service and procedures as described in the local unit's standard operating procedures. The exercise will not include higher levels of management within the service (above the unit level), members of the public or other agency personnel.

*For a multi-agency exercise:*

- The scope of this exercise includes those agencies with a role in the airport emergency plan. The exercise will not include any higher level of management of any organisation above the forward command level or members of the general public.

## Exercise concept document

Using the proposed exercise need, aim, objectives and scope, the exercise concept can now be further developed and documented. The exercise concept document is used to obtain the direction and authority to conduct the exercise. The exercise concept document should include details of the following:

- exercise need
- exercise aim
- exercise objectives
- exercise scope
- participating organisations
- governance and management structure (for planning the exercise)
- public information requirements
- proposed evaluation methodology
- proposed budget
- proposed timelines.

A template exercise concept document is included as Appendix 6.



## Discussion exercises (DISCEX)

Discussion exercises are built around discussion of a scenario. Participants can explore issues in depth and provide verbal responses to situations. Discussion exercises are useful for developing agreed approaches to particular events, assessing the effectiveness of plans, building relationships, and exploring novel ideas or approaches to managing emergencies. Discussion exercises often involve personnel who work at a strategic level brainstorming solutions to problems.

Discussion exercises are a cost-effective and efficient exercise method. They tend to be more free flowing, informal and exploratory than other exercise types. They can be conducted away from operational environments, often needing only a room and a whiteboard. They may be conducted as a stand-alone exercise, prelude to a functional or field exercise, or part of a graduated series of exercises.

## Seminars

Seminars are informal discussions, unconstrained by real-time portrayal of events and led by a presenter. They are generally employed to orient participants to, or provide an overview of legislation, strategies, plans, policies, procedures, protocols, response resources, and/or concepts and ideas. Seminars usually involve examining the plan/procedure through the use of a scenario and then discussing its key features.

Seminars may be useful to:

- induct new personnel
- train or assess personnel
- highlight key elements of a plan
- examine a plan.

## Agency presentation

An agency presentation is a discussion forum where participants present an action plan relevant to their agency's operational function. The agency is given a problem or issue in advance so it can prepare its presentation. Agency presentations can lack realism and immediacy, but they provide a useful review of existing procedures and encourage the development of new approaches. Agency presentations can be written and conducted with short lead times and are cost and time efficient. They are useful as learning activities, particularly when they are used to explore responses to a simulated threat or scenario in a non-threatening environment. Agency presentations may be useful to:

- consider strategic or tactical issues
- focus attention on the resources available at a given time and date
- share resource and procedural information

- build networks and develop a shared understanding of different agency capabilities and approaches
- make a presentation to stakeholders.

## Hypothetical

A hypothetical is a style of discussion exercise where problems are posed by a facilitator and considered by a panel of individuals 'on their feet'. The facilitator keeps the activity moving by asking probing questions and introducing unexpected events as the scenario unfolds.

Hypotheticals are often conducted in front of an audience of emergency managers and other stakeholders, and require careful preparation and a relatively longer lead-time than other discussion exercises. They are relatively inexpensive to prepare and run, although an experienced and effective facilitator may be hard to find. Hypotheticals are a particularly effective way to build a shared understanding of different approaches to problems. They are also useful for simulating operational stress by requiring participants to analyse complex problems and develop appropriate responses in real time.

This exercise type may be useful:

- when you intend to give little or no prior notice of problems to be resolved
- to share resource and procedural information
- to make a presentation to an audience
- to assess a decision maker's ability to 'think on their feet'
- if you seek to create a degree of operational stress.

## Syndicate progressive

Syndicate progressive exercises introduce problems of developing complexity to be considered by groups in syndicate. The term progressive refers to the graduated development of complexity that will usually occur in an emergency situation and which may be replicated in the exercise via a series of special ideas. Each problem contains a statement and three or four questions designed to focus syndicate attention along a desired path. For example, given a particular set of circumstances, a series of problems could focus on prevention, preparedness, response and then recovery. Syndicate exercises are relatively inexpensive to run but require careful preparation. They are useful for exercising groups of strategic managers or team leaders and promote sharing experiences and building common approaches to complex problems by ensuring multi-agency representation in each group. Syndicate exercises have a strong learning focus as they encourage

participation in small groups. This exercise type may be useful to:

- progress through phases of a problem or event or course of action
- encourage understanding of another agency's roles and responsibilities
- obtain different possible solutions to a common problem
- bring together differing backgrounds and experience levels
- examine strategic, political or complex issues.

## Workshops

Workshops differ from other discussion exercises, in that the focus is on achieving or building a product (e.g. a draft plan or policy). Workshops can be employed as part of a graduated series of activities to determine solutions to exercise and/or operational problems.

A workshop may also be used to produce standard operating procedures (SOPs). To be effective, workshops must be highly focused on a specific issue, and the desired objectives must be clearly defined.

## Functional exercises

Functional exercises are closely related to discussion exercises, but normally take place in an operational environment and require participants to actually perform the functions of their roles. They are designed to test or practise a particular function; for example, managing an incident or emergency in an IMT using maps and notional resources, or from within an emergency operations centre. Functions within the environment are conducted as if a real event were happening outside. Functional exercises are normally run in real time.

Scenario information is fed to participants in a manner similar to the way they would receive it 'in the real world', be that via phone, email or web-based incident management systems. The input of scenario information is managed by the EXCON team, under the direction of the exercise controller, in accordance with the order and timeframe detailed in the master schedule of events (MSE). Participants' performance is monitored by exercise facilitators and the tempo of the exercise can be increased or decreased by regulating the flow of exercise inputs. The aim and objectives of the exercise will determine the amount of interaction the facilitators have with exercise participants.

The exercise planner should be aware that large functional exercises may be complex to prepare and manage. The complexity may lie in developing realistic problems and occurrences and in the writing of the scenario. Likely responses must be planned

for and contingencies made for unexpected actions. Functional exercises can generate significant administrative work, both in preparation and conduct. They can be expensive to prepare, but their major advantage is that they can be played out many times with different participants, enabling standardisation and promoting consistency.

This exercise type may be useful:

- to practise, develop or assess procedures within a functional centre
- to practise, develop or assess decision-making skills within a centre
- to assess the interaction of the functional centre with field teams and other functional centres
- where there is no need to activate resources external to the centre
- when there are insufficient funds to activate resources external to the functional centre.

Any exercise regime has a place for both functional and field exercises. Functional exercises are generally constructed to place emphasis on control and coordination and it is this level that they are most suited to. The actions of notionally deployed organisations can be predetermined to bring out specific lessons at the higher levels. Functional exercises can be specifically designed to test higher decision-making levels without deploying tactical-level units – therefore this style of exercise can be cost-effective.

## Field exercises

Field exercises involve deployment of personnel to a simulated incident or emergency. These exercises may involve elements of functional exercises and often test control arrangements as well as 'on the ground' skills. A major field exercise often follows a series of discussion or functional exercises; or they can take the form of a demonstration, drill or full-scale deployment.

Complex field exercises can be very expensive given the numbers of people involved. A major field exercise will need an exercise management team to write it and numerous directing staff to design and conduct it. Designing the exercise can be time and resource intensive – generating a significant administrative load and demanding highly skilled staff. Despite these disadvantages, major field exercises are an effective way to simulate the likely events and occurrences in emergencies that rarely occur, but for which responders need to be prepared. In some circumstances, they are the only chance for responders to apply some of their skills or work with other agencies in a realistic setting.

This exercise type may be useful:

- to practise, develop or assess the competencies of on-ground personnel

- to evaluate the effectiveness of inter-agency coordination and cooperation
- to evaluate the activation of an emergency plan
- to consolidate a progressive exercise program
- if your objectives require deployment of field personnel.

## Drill-style exercises

Drill-style exercises are a coordinated, supervised activity employed to test a single specific operation or function in a single or multi-agency environment. Drills are commonly used to provide training on new equipment, develop or validate new policies or procedures, or practice and maintain current skills.

Drills are used to:

- create a narrow focus, measured against established standards
- provide immediate feedback and the opportunity to reset and rerun the exercise multiple times
- provide a realistic operational environment
- consider performance in isolation.

## Exercise tools

It should be noted that several web- and system-based proprietary products are available to support the conduct of simulations and exercises. Exercise managers should investigate these independently to determine if they are suitable for their own purpose.

## Exercise scenario

Writing of the exercise scenario cannot begin until its aim, objectives, scope and style have been finalised and approved.

Given the aim, objectives, scope and style of the exercise to be conducted, the exercise is developed by the 'general idea' and 'special idea(s)'.

The writing team is a key element of developing an exercise. Writing an exercise requires distinct skills and knowledge. For small exercises, this may be drawn from the planning staff, while on larger exercises the writing team may be drawn from several agencies and/or locations. When considering personnel as exercise writers, the following criteria should be applied to selecting appropriate writers:

- where possible they should have formal training in writing exercises
- they should have relevant skills and experience in the subject matter they are writing exercise problems for.

## General idea

The general idea is a broad statement of background information designed to provide exercise participants with the knowledge that would be available during a real incident or emergency. The general idea is usually issued to participating agencies or personnel well in advance of the event as part of the exercise briefings. For example:

The town of Dingo Creek is situated on the Long River. It has a population of 5000 and is an important rail and road transport hub for the surrounding rural district. It is located 800 km from the nearest capital city and has a small airport. The town has a significant flood threat and hazardous materials are regularly shipped by road and rail through the district. A small full-time fire brigade is supported by a volunteer brigade. There is a strong State Emergency Service unit in the town. The hospital has 20 beds with a well-equipped emergency room, while the attached ambulance station has two cars and two permanent officers. The police station has a sergeant and three constables. The shire headquarters are located on the town's main street, along with most of the town's commercial premises. There is a Main Roads works depot in the industrial area on the town's outskirts; nearby is a regional abattoir. Other industry in the district centres on agriculture, transport and distribution. Tourism is a growing industry, with two large caravan parks established on the banks of the river.

The general idea may also give detailed information about specific industries, local events or background information on particular hazards (i.e. chemicals or seasonal threats).

## Special ideas

Special ideas are used to drive the exercise. They provide realistic problems, incidents or information for participants to react to as they would on the job.

A chronological sequence should be prepared to provide information as the exercise unfolds. Personnel with specific roles are issued with special ideas at predetermined times to control the flow of events.

The term 'special ideas' is predominantly used in discussion exercises. The terms 'inputs', 'injects' or 'serials' are often used in the context of functional or field exercises.

Special ideas are used to:

- progressively develop the exercise scenario
- provide additional information to participants

- pose problem(s) for participants to solve
- place limits on participants' actions
- force action by participants.

Some examples of special ideas follow:

- At 2230 hrs a flood warning was issued for the Long River, advising that moderate flooding would occur over the next 36 hours.
- At 0928 hrs a semi-trailer crossing a low-lying causeway was washed off the road, spilling its load into the rising flood waters.
- At 1100 hrs a family refused to leave the caravan park, claiming their van was too valuable to leave behind and their car was being repaired.
- At 1352 hrs the ambulance reported it was bogged 15 km north of town on the North Road with a pregnant woman on-board, going into labour.
- At 1612 hrs a fire was reported in the Commercial Hotel.

Whatever the exercise writers decide to 'inject', this should be as brief and to-the-point as possible.

## Exercise inputs

Exercise inputs, also known as exercise injects or serials, are used in all types of exercise activities and provide additional information to support the developing scenario. These are often simulated and can be in the form of a telephone call, news report or other simulated medium. They should be arranged in a chronological order and the details recorded on a master schedule of events.

## Developing a master schedule of events

The master schedule of events is prepared by the exercise planning team and is used to:

- detail the sequence of events, particularly on the day of the exercise
- indicate the timing of each event
- identify who is responsible for tasks
- provide EXCON staff with a 'script'
- provide guidance for the pace and direction of the exercise.

Managing timing is an integral part of the master schedule. Some exercises require time to be compressed. For example, a flood discussion exercise might require a period of 48 hours to be compressed into six hours to achieve the outcome required. On the other hand, a field exercise requiring participants to apply practical skills may need to run in real time (or extended time) to meet its objectives. Varying time must be managed carefully given that, for example, compressing time too much can seriously reduce realism.

An effective master schedule of events should contain:

- serial or inject number
- timing of each inject
- intended responder to the event
- short summary of the event (scenario information)
- desired or expected outcome
- link to relevant control document (if applicable) or other serials
- EXCON member (or functional area) responsible for the inject
- notes section to record completion time or other instructions.

Suggested templates for a master schedule of events can be found at Appendix 10 and 11.

The complexity of the master schedule of events will depend on the size and scale of the exercise. While a master schedule of events should be prepared for a discussion exercise, it will be a much simpler document.

The exercise controller uses the master schedule to control the exercise while it is happening. They will ensure any problems are rectified and make alternative arrangements to keep the exercise flowing. The exercise controller can modify the flow and progress of the exercise to ensure the objectives are met. This may require a temporary halt to the exercise, changes in its direction, or speeding it up or slowing it down.

When developing an exercise, it is important for the planning team to anticipate and analyse the potential range of possible responses to a given inject. In some cases, 'branches' of alternative serials may need to be designed to accommodate the range of possible directions an exercise may take.



# Chapter 4 Exercise staff

## Overview

The roles of exercise staff may change as the exercise moves through the phases of the exercise management model. There will be dedicated roles and responsibilities during the planning phase, although the responsibilities may change when it comes time to conduct the exercise.

## Exercise planning function

Exercises need to be carefully planned and managed. Even the smallest of exercises require a coordinated approach to their design, conduct and evaluation. The function of the exercise planning team and identifying the functions that need to be managed are essential to ensure the success of any exercise.

Exercise planning staff functions may include some or all of the following:

- writing
- logistics
- evaluation
- media
- observer
- safety
- legal.

## Exercise director(s)

The exercise director(s) provides strategic oversight and direction on the planning, conduct and evaluation of the exercise. The exercise director(s) is responsible for approving the aim, objectives and supporting documentation, including the concept document, exercise plan and exercise instructions. In multi-agency exercises there will often be more than one exercise director. It is quite normal in those circumstances for the major participants in the exercise to each provide an exercise director for strategic advice and authority.

The exercise director(s) provides the authority to conduct the exercise, however they do not have a hands-on role in the planning or conduct phases. The exercise report will be provided to the exercise director(s) at the conclusion of the exercise so that appropriate action can be taken.

## Exercise planning team

The planning team will consist of those directly involved in the planning of the exercise and should include representation from participating agencies. It may have multi-agency representation and is chaired by the exercise controller.

The planning team assigns roles and responsibilities in accordance with the exercise planning governance structure. It identifies which functions are required for the exercise and develops plans and strategies such as the:

- exercise concept document
- aim and objectives
- scenario development and exercise inputs (exercise writing)
- logistics plan
- detailed budget proposal
- risk management strategy
- evaluation strategy
- media strategy
- observer program
- exercise plan and instructions.

## Writing function

Depending on the complexity of the exercise, the planning team will establish one or more exercise writing team(s). The exercise writing team(s) will report to the exercise planning team and be responsible for the detailed development of the master schedule of events, scenario and supporting documentation required as inputs or reference material during the conduct of the exercise.

Examples of subject matter that may require specialised writing teams include:

- scientific information (plume modelling etc.)
- investigation
- intelligence
- development of a casualty bank
- media.

An exercise writing team may comprise only two or three people for a smaller exercise or many in the case of a large exercise. The team(s) should include

subject-matter experts to ensure accurate, realistic and sufficient documentation is prepared.

To ensure continuity throughout the exercise, members of the exercise writing team(s) should be appointed to roles in the EXCON team during the conduct of the exercise.

## Logistics function

The logistics team will report to the exercise planning team and be responsible for identifying, sourcing, setting up, maintaining and repatriating the physical resources and services required for the conduct of the exercise and related activities. It is also responsible for developing the risk management plan.

A member of the logistics team should be appointed to undertake the role of logistics officer in the EXCON team during the conduct of the exercise.

## Evaluation function

The exercise evaluation coordinator or team will report to the exercise planning team and is responsible for planning and coordinating all aspects of the exercise evaluation (including exercise management), and documenting the findings in a post-exercise report.

Evaluation roles should be identified during the planning process, ensuring that team members have the relevant subject-matter expertise. Where possible staff involved in the exercise evaluation team should not have any other exercise appointment.

## Media/public relations function

The media coordinator or team reports to the exercise planning team and is responsible for developing the communications plan, including implementing real and pseudo media strategies.

## Real media

This function looks after the media and public information strategies throughout the planning and conduct phases of the exercise. This may include:

- briefing government, industry partners and stakeholders
- developing a public information strategy.

Clear and early identification of a consistent message is essential. The real media function is also responsible for managing any media issues that may arise during the exercise.

## Pseudo media (simulated media)

This function is responsible for writing media inputs and coordinating the extent of pseudo media required for the exercise. Pseudo media can add realism and pressure to exercise scenarios and may include pre-written news reports, as well as live footage or online reporting.

## Observer function

The exercise planning team needs to consider whether an observer program is appropriate. The observer function is responsible for coordinating the exercise experience for observers, including VIPs. This involves balancing expectations, exercise requirements, agency interests, security restrictions and available resources. These activities could include, but are not limited to:

- arranging transport and accommodation
- managing cultural and protocol issues
- the reception of visiting personnel
- organising social and after-hours activities.

## Safety function

Running an exercise creates potential risks for stakeholders. To ensure safety the following considerations should be reviewed before the exercise begins:

- Has a risk management plan been established?
- Is everyone trained to perform his or her task?
- Have clear safety briefings been delivered and understood?
- What SOP exists to cover safety issues and do they apply during the exercise?
- Are safety officers in place to monitor safety during the exercise?
- What contingency plans have been prepared?

## Legal function

The exercise planning team will identify the need for exercise-related legal advice. These requirements could include, but are not limited to:

- contingent liability
- applicable legislative issues
- liaison on unique 'legal' issues pertaining to the exercise.

## Transition from planning to conduct

In most cases the skills and roles required during the exercise conduct phase will differ from those needed during the planning phase. Detailed explanation of the roles required during the conduct phase can be found in the Conduct chapter of this handbook.

## Planning meetings

The planning team has primary responsibility for the design, conduct and evaluation of the exercise. This responsibility is managed through a range of planning meetings. The diagram below provides an overview of exercise meetings in the exercise cycle.



Figure 4.1: Schedule of exercise planning meetings

### Concept development meeting

The purpose of the concept development meeting is to discuss, consider and agree on the broad exercise concept. It should confirm the need and answer the question, 'Why do we need to conduct an exercise?' Consideration may be given to the exercise aim, objectives, evaluation methodology, key dates, exercise localities and participants.

The outcome of the concept development meeting should be general agreement on the exercise concept and sufficient guidance to develop a concept document (see section on exercise documentation).

### Initial planning meeting

The initial planning meeting is perhaps the most important of the planning meetings: it provides the broad agreement on the exercise framework and thus enables further planning to proceed. The purpose of the initial planning meeting is to identify how the approved exercise concept will be implemented to achieve the exercise objectives. The exercise concept document must be used as the basis for discussions and as many stakeholders as practicable should be included in this process.

The outcome of the initial planning meeting should be broad agreement on the exercise parameters and sufficient guidance to develop the exercise plan.

### Ongoing planning meetings

The purpose of planning meetings is to discuss and refine exercise management arrangements and review

the status of exercise planning. These meetings also allow for the identification and management of any issues that arise during the process. Depending on the complexity of the exercise it may be necessary to conduct several planning meetings.

Specialist working groups (such as writing teams) may need to meet separately and more often.

Meetings should be planned in advance, have compulsory attendance, be minuted and use action items to ensure identified activities are completed on time. Planning meetings are more effective when stakeholders ensure the same representatives attend throughout the planning process.

### Final planning meeting

The purpose of the final planning meeting is to review all exercise planning and confirm that planning is complete and all arrangements are in place for participants, exercise staff and logistics. The scenario and all documents should be validated – this can be achieved by conducting a trial run of part or all of the exercise.

Introduction of any new planning detail should be avoided at this stage. The meeting should identify any outstanding issues and allocate responsibility for their resolution.

The final planning meeting should be held a number of weeks before the exercise and preferably before related activities begin (i.e. workshops or training).

### Post-exercise meeting

The purpose of the post-exercise meeting is to finalise the exercise and related activities. This will include the exercise evaluation and any subsequent reporting activities that need to be undertaken. The post-exercise meeting may also identify issues and suggest treatment options for future exercises.

A draft exercise report should form the basis of discussion at this meeting.

## Other planning issues

### Risk management

Risk is inherent in every emergency service operation. The Australian and New Zealand Standard for Risk Management, AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 Risk management – Principles and guidelines, defines risk as 'the chance of something happening that will have an impact on objectives'. It also states that risks can have a positive and a negative effect on outcomes.

Most legislation reflects the importance of managing workplace risk by requiring employers to adopt a systematic approach to managing risks to health

and safety in the workplace and to eliminate any foreseeable risk if not reasonably practicable to control the risk. The employer must also consult with employees when decisions are made that could affect their health or safety.

Risk management is about identifying potential variations from what we plan or desire, and managing those variations to maximise opportunity, minimise loss and improve decisions and outcomes. Managing risk means identifying and taking opportunities to improve performance, as well as taking action to avoid or reduce the chances of something going wrong.

In the context of designing, conducting and evaluating exercises, a systematic risk management approach will reduce the degree of uncertainty and increase decision-making accuracy and the likelihood of positive outcomes.

Exercise planners should consider risks that may occur during the conduct of the exercise (e.g. urgent duty driving, safety of venues), as well as risks to the exercise itself (e.g. impact of a real event, industrial action) as part of the risk management process.

The development and maintenance of a risk management plan and risk register is an integral part of the planning process. Exercise planners should refer to available materials that are specific to risk management for more guidance.

## Exercise venue

The planning team will need to secure an appropriate venue for the exercise. The type of venue may differ significantly depending on the style of exercise. Planners should consider availability and suitability when choosing a venue, taking into account factors such as:

- occupational health and safety
- visibility of exercise activities to the public/media
- realism
- vulnerability to damage
- rehabilitation issues
- access
- available services (e.g. power).

It is essential to conduct a site inspection before the exercise. A professional assessment/inspection may be required to assess a venue's suitability or risk. A contingency plan may be required in case a venue becomes unavailable.

When conducting a field exercise at a venue it is vital to ensure that arrangements/agreements are in place in relation to:

- legal indemnities
- responsibility for damage/restoration.

## Finance

All stakeholders should have a clear understanding of the financial arrangements in place for the exercise, including:

- management of any exercise budget
- guidelines for exercise expenditure
- approval and payment of any overtime
- responsibility for the rehabilitation of damaged facilities.

## Real media releases

Real media releases may be issued before, during or after the exercise. Media releases are useful to inform the public about the event and any disruptions it may cause, or to raise the profile of the responding organisations.

## Notification to residents

As a matter of courtesy and good public relations, as well as to identify unforeseen stakeholder issues, residents and businesses close to the exercise site should be advised of the forthcoming event – especially if it could interrupt day-to-day activities. Exercise planners should involve community stakeholders during the design stage wherever the exercise might disrupt normal community activities.

## Community engagement

Depending on the aim and objectives, exercises can benefit from community involvement. Exercise planners should consider whether it is appropriate to include the community in the actual conduct of the exercise. Local involvement (e.g. in a community evacuation exercise) promotes resilience in the community by raising awareness of local plans and encouraging preparedness. Community members or representatives can be involved throughout the exercise management process and can provide invaluable advice about possible exercise needs that exist or plans that the community would like to practise or test.

As a minimum the local community needs to be engaged so it understands and is aware of any impact or disruption the exercise may cause.

## Selecting role players

Using people to 'role play' disaster victims or other roles can add realism to an exercise. However, it does add an extra element of risk that needs to be managed.

When selecting people to role play, the following should be considered:

- Some individuals may react adversely to receiving moulage (make-up simulating injuries) and being

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placed in a scenario that might cause them to recall painful experiences. Exercise managers should ensure appropriate debriefing and psychological first aid is available if required.

- Role players should fully understand the nature of the required role.
- Role players should not have experienced a major incident in the past that is still a sensitive issue for them.
- Role players should not have any existing conditions that may affect their role in the exercise; for example, pregnancy or medical conditions such as asthma, epilepsy, blood pressure anomalies, cardiac conditions, back problems, sensitive skin or claustrophobia.
- Role players should not be on medication that may affect their role.
- Use of minors in an exercise has legal ramifications including consent and is not recommended. Children are also more likely to act outside their role.
- Exercise staff should investigate the respective workplace/occupational health and safety legislation or other relevant legislation to determine the extent to which their duty of care applies to role players, and obtain advice about issues such as insurance coverage.

# Chapter 5 Exercise documentation

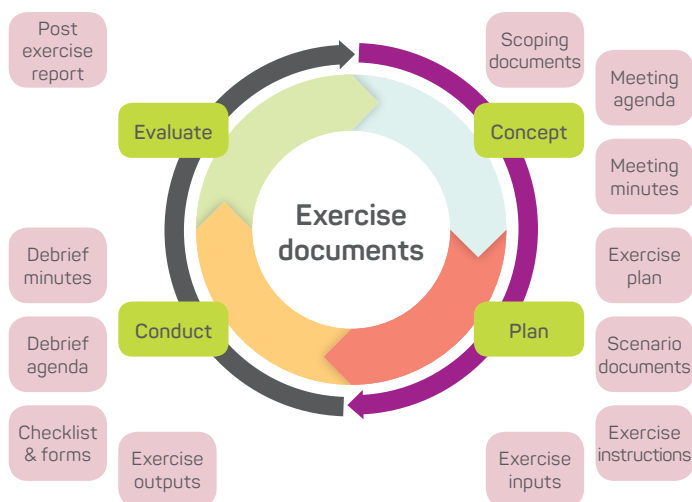


Figure 5.1: Schedule of exercise documents

## Introduction

Exercise managers should spend enough time to properly document the exercise. Documentation provides information for the people involved in designing, conducting and evaluating the exercise.

Good documentation can also allow an exercise to be used more than once in certain circumstances, providing a valuable return on the time invested. This section provides a framework for the different documents that may be useful to manage an exercise.

Exercise documentation is essential for a number of reasons:

- verbal instructions are not reliable
- documents form a permanent record of what has been planned and undertaken
- documents guide the running of the exercise and support succession planning
- documents help to gain commitment to the exercise.

## Exercise management documents

The amount of documentation and the detail required will vary considerably, depending on the size and complexity of the intended exercise.

However, as a guide you should consider obtaining or generating the following:

- exercise scoping documents
- exercise concept document
- planning meetings agenda and minutes
- exercise plan
- detailed scenario documents
- exercise instructions
- post-exercise report.

Each of these documents plays an important role in the management of exercises and will contribute significantly to the success of your exercise.

## Exercise scoping documents

Exercise scoping documents will help you to answer the question 'Why do we need to conduct an exercise?' and may consist of previous exercise/incident debriefs that identified areas of performance needing attention.

## Exercise concept document

The exercise concept document is the authority to conduct the exercise and provides a broad overview of what is to be achieved and how. The document's purpose is to provide a conceptual framework around the planning of an exercise. It will provide background information, objectives, governance structure, an overview of the scenario and key participating agencies.

The concept document will be approved by the exercise director(s), giving the planning team the authority to formally begin planning activities.

A suggested template for a concept document is available at Appendix 6.

## Planning meetings agenda and minutes

During exercise planning it is vitally important that records of proceedings are kept. Minutes of any meeting form a useful background for decisions and make writing subsequent exercises easier. Minutes should record decisions, allocate tasks to specific individuals and provide action deadlines.

Suggested templates for a range of meeting agenda are available at Appendix 1-5.

## Exercise plan

The purpose of the exercise plan is to outline the method by which the exercise will be designed, conducted and evaluated.

The exercise plan describes the aim, objectives and performance measures for the exercise. It should provide guidance on all issues relating to the design, conduct and evaluation of the exercise. It should also outline the program of related activities with proposed dates and sequence of events. Proposed participants and exercise management arrangements should be identified in addition to planning milestones and resource considerations.

While the exercise concept document serves as the initial overview and authority to start exercise planning, the exercise plan is developed in the planning phase and may need to be updated as planning progresses.

The exercise plan will not be distributed to exercise participants; however, some of the information will need to be reproduced in the relevant exercise instructions.

A suggested template for an exercise plan is available at Appendix 7.

## Detailed scenario documentation

The type and size of the exercise will influence the required level of scenario documentation. As a guide the following should be considered:

- detailed description of the scenario (including general and special ideas)
- master schedule of events (including exercise timings and sequence of inputs)
- control documents – any information that participants require to support their decision-making (e.g. plans or weather forecasts)
- background information and profiles (e.g. information on people, businesses or places mentioned in the scenario and inputs).

Any scenario documentation should be clearly marked as 'exercise material only'.

## Exercise instructions

These are provided to exercise participants and staff in advance of the exercise. While all instructions will contain similar information, they may need to be tailored to their respective audiences. They should provide enough information and be accompanied by any pre-reading that the participants or staff members require to take part in the exercise.

Exercise instructions (also known as the participant's handbook) for participants may include:

- joining instructions
- exercise overview
- contact information
- situation (general idea)
- other information as required.

Other specific exercise instructions may need to be created for:

- evaluators
- EXCON staff
- observers.

## Evaluation documentation

Evaluation documentation is used by the exercise evaluators to collect information for conducting a thorough evaluation of the exercise. The evaluation documentation will be prepared during the design phase of the exercise and may include a range of documents, checklists and/or templates provided to participants, facilitators, observers or evaluators to collect appropriate information.

Suggested templates for evaluation documentation can be found at Appendix 14-21.

## Post-exercise report

The author(s) of the post-exercise report will be determined by the exercise director(s) and will include input from the evaluation team. The post-exercise report should include:

- a description of the exercise
- a narrative of key events
- an evaluation summary addressing the attainment of the exercise aim, objectives and standards
- key observations and possible treatment options.

# Chapter 6 Conduct phase

## Overview

The exercise conduct phase includes starting, managing and finishing the exercise. The principles outlined during the conduct phase may be applied across discussion, functional and field exercises.

Regardless of the size of the exercise being conducted, exercise managers should be aware of a range of exercise management issues to be managed, including but not limited to:

- pre-exercise activities
- roles of exercise staff during the conduct of the exercise
- occupational health and safety (OHS) issues
- briefings
- debriefings.

## Pre-exercise activities

A range of pre-exercise activities will need to occur before an exercise begins. These activities are required to prepare agencies and individuals for their participation in the exercise. These activities may take the form of:

- notifications – agency/political/senior officials/ community/media
- rehearsals/new training
- final review of exercise documentation
- final technology and communication requirements and checks
- establishing facilities
- equipment familiarisation
- discussion exercise(s), seminar(s) and/or workshops
- development or review of plans and procedures.

## Exercise staff roles

The people who run and support the exercise conduct are called the exercise control (EXCON) staff. Also known as the directing staff, they are drawn from the participating agencies. EXCON staff should be identified early to allow for clear lines of command and communication to be established, as well as enable the rehearsal of EXCON functions. EXCON staff should avoid

any unnecessary interference with exercise participants during the exercise and should be clearly identifiable by wearing tabards.

The role of EXCON staff is to ensure the exercise is conducted in a safe and effective manner. They should monitor participants, help create a realistic atmosphere, keep the exercise running smoothly, make rulings for participants, introduce scenario information and guide participants towards achieving the stated objectives.

The generic exercise control structure (below) provides an overview of common roles in exercise control. Some functions are common to all exercises; others are only relevant in limited circumstances.

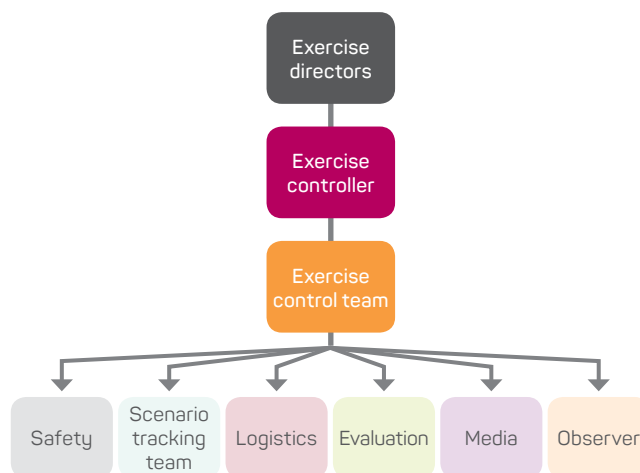


Figure 6.1 Exercise control structure

## Exercise controller

The exercise director(s) appoints an exercise controller who is in turn responsible for selecting and appointing people to the functions required to conduct the exercise.

The exercise controller is responsible for:

- managing all exercise conduct activities to ensure adequate opportunities to achieve the exercise objectives
- safety and risk management during the conduct phase in accordance with the approved plans.



## Exercise control (EXCON) function

The exercise controller leads the EXCON team, which is responsible for:

- overseeing the conduct of the exercise
- ensuring that participants have the opportunity to achieve the aim and objectives
- managing the master schedule of events
- simulating activities not performed by the participants
- contributing to the post-exercise report.

## Safety officer(s)

Safety must take precedence over exercise activities and safety officers must immediately intervene if safety is compromised. Depending on the size of the exercise, more than one safety officer position may be required: these officers will report to a chief safety officer who is directly responsible to the exercise controller. Safety officers should be located and monitor activity wherever field activities are being conducted.

## Scenario tracking team

The scenario tracking team monitors the progress of the master schedule of events and injects scenario information wherever required to progress the exercise. It may also simulate the roles of organisations that are not participating in the exercise.

## Logistics

A logistics officer may be appointed to coordinate and manage logistic requirements. This may involve:

- liaising with venue owners or operators
- coordinating catering and welfare requirements
- arranging transport of personnel and equipment
- commissioning the construction of props, models or other elements required for the scenario
- procuring additional equipment, consumables and resources (e.g. lighting, portable toilets)
- setting up registration or administration areas for exercise control.

## Evaluation

The exercise evaluation coordinator or team will manage the evaluators during the conduct of the exercise. This includes ensuring that evaluators are able to move between venues to observe key parts of the scenario and be present at the various debriefs. The evaluation coordinator also ensures the relevant evaluator reports are submitted in a timely fashion at the conclusion of the exercise.

Further detail on the role of evaluators is detailed in the evaluation chapter of this handbook.

## Media

The media function is responsible for handling any real media requirements during the exercise, including distributing a media release before the exercise begins (if necessary) and coordinating exercise footage and interviews to promote the exercise in news media.

## Observers coordinator

Exercises may attract observers, ranging from VIPs to members of participating organisations. To ensure observer safety and minimise disruption to the exercise, the following should be considered:

- appointing an observers coordinator to ensure:
- an observers program is developed
- a set of joining instructions is distributed, detailing a meeting time and place on the day, along with an overview of the exercise
- where possible an exercise viewing area is established, where observers have access to the exercise, but can in no way interfere with proceedings
- any personnel escorting observers are thoroughly briefed on the exercise scenario, its aim and objectives
- personnel are allocated responsibilities that may include meeting and escorting observers to predetermined viewing areas, explaining the exercise aim and objectives, providing a running commentary on the exercise and answering observers' questions.

## Other possible roles

Depending on the size and complexity of the exercise it may be necessary to appoint personnel to fulfil other roles.

Role player manager – role players are integral to the conduct of many field exercises but they must be closely managed. The success of an exercise can largely depend on how well they are briefed and work within the parameters of the exercise.

Role players provide realism and create an emotional perspective to the activity. They adopt the roles of casualties, victims, bystanders and other people affected during an exercise. Role players are often made up to appear injured (known as moulage). Sometimes they are used to act as media representatives or political figures, particularly in field exercises.

The role player manager's duties normally include:

- ensuring role players are registered on arrival
- pre-exercise role player briefings, including details of expected 'role' behaviour and possible reactions during the exercise
- coordinating moulage
- positioning the role players pre-exercise

- managing role player welfare (e.g. hydration, shade, warmth, sun screen) during the conduct of the exercise
- arranging for debriefing and deregistration of role players at the conclusion of the exercise.

All role players must be registered before they are deployed into the exercise and then deregistered before leaving the exercise area.

Following the exercise a formal debriefing for role players provides them with a vital forum to share their experiences of the exercise. A unique insight into how the responders dealt with the situation can also be gained.

It is also important to allow role players to de-role following an exercise. That is, they need to go through a process of 'stepping out of character' to minimise any unexpected psychological effects. This can occur naturally as part of the exercise debrief, or may require a conscious activity where the role player has been in-role for some time, or the role has been particularly demanding.

It is also important that role players are thanked after participating in an exercise, given they are often volunteers who give up their time to help out.

Staging area manager – manages the deployment of participants from a predetermined staging area during field exercises.

Security – manages access to exercise sites.

Damage control – in all field deployment exercises the damage control officer is responsible for assessing, recording and reporting on any damage caused during the exercise. In some instances any such damage may need to be repaired and the venue/site returned to pre-exercise conditions. The damage control officer should ensure that pre- and post-exercise venue inspections are completed.

IT and communications support – manages systems being used during the exercise.

## Briefings

For the best opportunity to achieve the objectives and ensure a successful exercise, it is essential that briefings are conducted for participants, role players, EXCON, evaluators and observers.

All exercise briefings should follow a consistent format for ease of understanding, as well as support any exercise instructions people have received before the exercise.

Briefings should be accurate, concise and sequential. The SMEACS format is recommended because it presents the important information in a logical sequence and is currently used by many emergency management agencies.

- Situation – describes what has happened and perhaps what has been done
- Mission – describes what is to be achieved (aim, objectives)
- Execution – how objectives are to be achieved: what needs to be done, not how to do it
- Administration and logistics – administrative and logistical arrangements (e.g. transport, catering)
- Command and communication – command structure and communication arrangements for the exercise
- Safety – including welfare and 'No Duff' explanation (see definition below)

Specific briefings will be required for the different functional roles being undertaken during the conduct phase.

Consider specific briefings to the following groups:

- exercise staff
- observers
- role players
- participants
- evaluators
- media.

## Exercise control (EXCON)

Briefing exercise staff is essential to allow them to clarify their role during the exercise and ensure they understand the scenario and how it will unfold. In some cases it may be appropriate to conduct a rehearsal with EXCON staff to confirm timings and familiarise them with the exercise environment.

Exercise briefings usually include details relating to the general idea, special ideas, master schedule of events and safety instructions, and amplify information contained in the exercise instructions and/or exercise plan. The EXCON briefing should include the:

- exercise aim and objectives
- key aspects of the scenario
- roles and responsibilities of EXCON staff
- communications plan (including organisational structure)
- information, communication and technology systems
- intervention strategies (circumstances under which EXCON will intervene and re-guide participants)
- actions in the event of unforeseen circumstances
- post-exercise requirements.

Individual exercise staff may receive separate instructions tailored for their specific function, such as:

- evaluator instructions
- site staging instructions
- arrangements for the media and visitors
- damage control
- specific safety instructions.

## Participants

Briefing of exercise participants is essential to allow them to engage effectively in the exercise. The briefing should include:

- exercise aim and objectives
- evaluation focus and expectations
- roles and responsibilities during the exercise
- exercise scope and rules
- information, communication and technology systems
- actions in the event of unforeseen circumstances
- 'No Duff' arrangements (see definition below)
- post-exercise arrangements
- safety.

## Safety briefing

The safety briefing should include information relating to:

- site-specific considerations (e.g. hazards, out of bounds)
- 'No Duff' arrangements (see definition below)
- identifying, managing and reporting hazards
- the process for reporting any injuries incurred during the exercise
- monitoring environmental conditions
- monitoring the welfare of all participants throughout the exercise (including stress-related health issues).

## Evaluators

In addition to the general briefing about the aim and objectives of the exercise, evaluators need to understand their role as articulated in the exercise evaluation plan. This may include:

- observing participants' responses and recording their observations
- observing and assessing processes, procedures and techniques
- evaluating and reporting on the achievement of objectives.

## Observers

Observers need to be briefed on any restrictions placed on them. It should be highlighted that they are only observing the exercise and should not provide input at any time, other than for a safety issue.

## Role players

It is essential that role players are fully briefed on their involvement before the exercise begins, particularly on use of the term 'No Duff'.

Role players should be informed that they may withdraw from the exercise if they feel unsafe, unwell or anxious about events. The role player briefing should include the withdrawal process.

## No Duff

All messages relating to authentic injuries or incidents must be prefixed by the word 'No Duff'. Should such an event occur, the safety officer, in consultation with the exercise controller, may pause or stop the exercise to manage the real event.

## Starting the exercise

For the exercise to start effectively, several activities need to be completed just before the scheduled start time. These may include:

- final test of information, communication and technology systems
- last-minute briefing for all exercise staff, confirming readiness to proceed
- positioning simulated casualties, props and special effects
- positioning of EXCON staff and support personnel
- positioning of exercise participants
- advice to the exercise controller that all is ready.

An exercise can start in many ways although it must be coordinated by the exercise controller. Discussion exercises usually begin with the facilitator introducing the subject to the participants. Functional exercises may be started by an incoming message or a written script that normally introduces the first piece of scenario information. Usually field exercises will begin via a radio or telephone message that an incident has taken place, followed by some type of response by a participating agency.

## Managing the exercise

The exercise is managed by EXCON staff in accordance with the master schedule of events.

The exercise controller can call a temporary halt to the exercise to change its direction, speed it up or slow it down to ensure the exercise objectives can be achieved.

EXCON staff support the exercise controller by ensuring that all is proceeding well at each location and that appropriate inputs occur in accordance with the master schedule of events. EXCON staff need to be prepared to react to participant responses and take appropriate action.

The EXCON team should conduct regular briefings to ensure effective management of the exercise; that is,

momentum is being maintained and the objectives are being achieved. By maintaining communication, EXCON maintains control and an overview of exercise activities. Situational awareness may also be achieved by:

- monitoring the actions of participants and role players
- audio/video and/or other information technology aids
- field reports from exercise staff.

The exercise management strategy should be linked to the exercise aim and determine the intervention strategy for EXCON staff.

EXCON staff may:

- pause and guide (if participants and exercise activities are moving away from the objectives)
- stop, debrief and reset (if exercise activities move well outside of the intended objectives)
- stop the exercise (in the event of a major safety issue).

EXCON staff may also:

- let mistakes run to see if the participants can overcome barriers to the achievement of the objectives
- let perceived mistakes run to see if the participants develop a new method for achieving the objectives (Is it actually a mistake or is moving outside the expected response actually the best course of action?).

## Exercise conduct issues

### Exercise communication

There will normally be two components to exercise communications: one for participants and one for exercise staff. Exercise staff need to be in contact with one another throughout the conduct stage of the exercise. This is most commonly achieved by using mobile phones and/or a separate radio network (control network). Normal communication protocols are appropriate for the control network.

It is crucial that exercise staff protocols are identified and agreed to before the day of the exercise and communicated to all members of EXCON.

It is preferable for EXCON staff to have a phone network uninterrupted by external calls. Receiving other business calls during an exercise can be extremely distracting and disruptive to the exercise.

Participants' communication is normally on radio channels monitored by exercise staff and other agency personnel. To avoid confusion with real events, exercise messages sent on normal agency communications channels must be prefixed by the word 'exercise'.

In field and functional exercises in particular, maintaining a separate communications network between the participants and EXCON needs to be considered. This provides a platform for the managed introduction of exercise special ideas and/or serials and also serves as a control mechanism for the exercise controller.

### Site security

Exercises may need to be cordoned off from the public. Equipment, props and other resources may also need to be protected. A security coordinator may be appointed to:

- manage site access
- coordinate protection of physical assets
- establish perimeters
- prevent unauthorised filming and photography and the disclosure of operational procedures.

### Identification of exercise staff

In all exercises the proper identification and roles of exercise staff is essential. This serves to differentiate them from participants and role players and, in large multi-agency exercises, to identify particular roles. This is normally achieved through the use of tabards, name plates or arm bands depicting role title (e.g. safety officer).

### Managing real events

The term 'No Duff' should be used to indicate that a real event or injury has taken place. It will then be the decision of the exercise controller as to whether the exercise needs to pause or stop.

## Finishing the exercise – ENDEX

Finishing the exercise is a controlled activity. The exercise controller is responsible for finishing the exercise in a pre-arranged manner and communicating an appropriate message to all participants. An accepted term for concluding the exercise is 'ENDEX'.

The exercise may end in accordance with:

- a designated time, according to the master schedule of events
- achievement of all objectives
- completion of designated tasks
- if it is not safe to continue with the exercise
- if other activities (including a safety breach or actual responses) hinder the progress of the exercise or render the objectives unachievable.

In any case the exercise controller must consider strategies, should it be necessary, to terminate the exercise before the pre-arranged time.

During a field exercise a progressive stand-down of agencies/capabilities can begin when they have achieved their respective objectives, as long as it does not affect the continuing functions of other participants and has been approved by the exercise controller. It is important not to overlook the activities required to repatriate the exercise site and return equipment to its pre-exercise state. While this will largely be the responsibility of logistics, the time and effort required should not be underestimated and the staff involved must be given every opportunity to participate in designated post-exercise activities.

## Debriefing the exercise

A series of debriefs will be required at the conclusion of an exercise. Depending on the scale of the exercise these may include:

- hot debrief (immediately post-exercise) for:
  - participants
  - EXCON
- role players.
- agency-specific debrief
- formal multi-agency debrief involving all participants and EXCON staff
- exercise management debrief.

In all cases the debrief must be planned and communicated to those who need to be involved.

While briefings usually start with general information and then become more detailed in subsequent briefings, the reverse is the case with debriefs. That is, detailed information is collected at a lower level, with that information contributing to higher-level and subsequent debriefs.

An essential component of a successful exercise is the ability to debrief the activities of the conduct phase. This particular aspect can be undertaken at various times during the exercise depending on the activities occurring at the time. The debrief may be conducted at the end of an activity or at the end of the exercise and is generally divided into two categories: hot debrief and formal debrief.

### Hot debrief

An immediate debrief should be provided for all participants and staff to capture information and feedback while it is still fresh in people's minds. This debrief would normally be conducted by the team leader or supervisor of a functional area or capability to help identify issues or concerns.

The hot debrief enables all participants to gain an insight into how the exercise was conducted and how their role may have influenced the exercise.

The hot debrief should include but be not limited to:

- what worked well
- what didn't work well
- safety issues
- what, if any, immediate action is required.

It may not be possible to capture the responses of all participants in a face-to-face forum. Consideration should be given to the development of a participant survey, which can be completed remotely and collated as part of the exercise evaluation.

### Formal debrief

Conducting a formal debrief after the exercise provides an opportunity for key agency representatives and exercise staff to highlight areas of concern, as well as the positive outcomes of the exercise.

This debrief is more formal and is led by an experienced facilitator. It should focus on strategic multi-agency aspects of the exercise that may require further discussion and clarification, and possibly recommend future actions.

Participants' contributions to debriefings can be verbal or written. In either case information collected at formal debriefings must be recorded so it can be used in the exercise report.

As with briefings, a standard format for debriefings should be adopted and an agenda distributed and followed.

At the start of any debrief the facilitator should clearly state the aim and objectives of the debrief. The following is a guide to the issues that may be covered in an exercise debrief:

- analyse the exercise to determine what worked well, what didn't work well and areas for improvement without apportioning blame
- address specific questions that arise from the achievement or non-achievement of objectives
- acknowledge good performance
- seek constructive information
- focus on improving procedures and training
- explore the appropriateness and effectiveness of the exercise itself
- record relevant information to enable reports to be compiled
- summarise major points and suggest follow-up action.

Debriefs are not to be confused with the evaluation process; however, the outcomes will form part of the data collected for completing the post-exercise report.

# Chapter 7 Evaluation

## Why evaluate?

The process for evaluating an exercise should start with the initial concept meeting and continue through until the final debriefings have been completed, reports are issued and corrective actions are agreed on.

Exercise managers need to consider whether it is their responsibility only to evaluate the exercise and report on the outcomes to be resolved, or whether they should also implement and track corrective actions as part of the resolution process.

Even the smallest of exercises should incorporate an exercise report, although this will be less detailed than for a large-scale exercise. Conducting a thorough evaluation is not a minor undertaking, and may require dedicated staff and careful consideration.

Evaluation can include input from all aspects of the exercise and should be informed by:

- outputs from the exercise planning process and planning meetings
- observations from exercise staff
- outputs from the exercise debriefs
- observations/reports from the exercise evaluator(s).

The output from the evaluation should be a written report. This might include observations, findings, treatment options or recommendations based on the information gathered during the exercise. The outcomes from one exercise may not be appropriate to all situations and therefore any corrective action needs to be carefully considered.

The exercise evaluation should include two components:

Exercise outcomes [participants' performance against objectives], and

Exercise management [what you as an exercise management team have learned/would improve]

For each of these components, the exercise report should attempt to answer the following questions:

- What did we plan to do [what were the objectives]?
- What did we achieve – how did this differ from what was planned [were objectives met and if not, how did the outcomes differ]?
- Why did it happen [what led to the objective(s) not being achieved as planned]?
- What can be done differently in the future [what improvements need to be made]?

Outcomes from an exercise should contribute to an organisation's learning and improvement.

Evaluation methods are not designed solely for use during exercises; they are also transferable to real-time operations and other activities (e.g. training, performance reviews). While real-time operations will not be structured and pre-planned as exercises (particularly in terms of the scripting aspect), the design of objectives for the evaluation can be modified to reflect the active operational situation and gather lessons from the real-time deployment of capabilities. These types of lessons are an indispensable input to the development of any capability.

## Objectives

Sound objectives are essential not only to a successful exercise, but also to its evaluation. A good exercise planning team will produce achievable, measurable objectives. Evaluators should help with this process – in some instances they will need to identify objectives that need to be revised or improved to meet the required outcomes. Evaluators may be placed in the situation of being brought into the exercise late in the planning process where the existing objectives are not achievable and/or measurable and will therefore need to be revised.

As outlined in the Concept chapter of this handbook, these objectives should conform to the SMART criteria; that is, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Task-related.

A challenge for evaluators will be to ensure the objectives meet these criteria, and that standards or performance measures exist for them. The ideal situation for an evaluator is for a capability to have clear objectives with measurable standards. Where these do not exist, the evaluator will have to help develop measurable standards against which to evaluate.

The focus for evaluators during any activity should be on reporting against the objectives. On occasion, evaluators may identify things outside the objectives that merit reporting, but this is generally the exception rather than the rule.

In addition to the design of robust objectives, it is critical to identify the means by which achievement of these will be measured. This can be done via performance measures or standards, which may:

- exist as part of current standard operating procedures (SOPs), or
- need to be developed before the activity is conducted.

It may be that for the testing of new SOPs, such standards need to be developed as a product of the activity or through interaction with the relevant organisation. These will subsequently need to be tested and evaluated for their validity.

Standards provide evaluators with a benchmark against which to assess performance, and are used to quantify the objectives to reflect aspects of the task that are critical to successful performance. These aspects will determine what evaluators will measure and use as evidence to support their conclusions about performance during the activity.

## Evaluation process

There are four stages in the exercise evaluation process:

- Plan and coordinate the evaluation
- Observe the exercise and collect data
- Analyse the data
- Develop the exercise report

These four stages begin with pre-exercise evaluation planning and conclude with the development of the exercise report. By using an exercise evaluation process, exercise planners ensure the exercise aim and objectives inform a focused evaluation, which produces actionable outcomes.

## Plan and coordinate the evaluation

Planning and coordination support an effective and successful exercise evaluation.

The planning process should include the:

- appointment of an evaluation coordinator
- examination and review of exercise objectives to determine the requirements of the evaluation
- development of an evaluation plan
- identification, training and briefing of evaluators.

## Appoint evaluation coordinator

The evaluation coordinator should be appointed at the start of the concept phase to oversee the evaluation process. The evaluation coordinator should be a member of the exercise planning team and be familiar with:

- the identified need, aim and objectives of the exercise
- plans, policies and procedures of the participating organisation(s)
- inter-agency coordination issues
- data collection and analysis techniques.

## Determine evaluation requirements

An analysis of the aim and objectives of the exercise will determine the evaluation requirements. These include the plans, tools and evaluators needed to effectively collect data and analyse information.

Discussion activities may not require the same level of evaluation planning as deployment (functional or field) exercises. More complex exercises involve multiple evaluators, possibly in different locations, and require more detailed planning to ensure the evaluation is coordinated.

## Identification, training and briefing of evaluators

Once evaluation requirements have been determined, the evaluation coordinator manages the identification, training and briefing of evaluators. The evaluation requirements determine how many evaluators will be needed, what kind of subject-matter expertise they require, how they are assigned during an exercise, and what kind of training and briefing they need before the exercise.

## Identifying evaluators

Evaluators need appropriate expertise in evaluation. They also need to either have subject-matter expertise or be able to identify requirements for and manage subject-matter experts to help the evaluation where required. An evaluator may also be called on to provide impartial and supportive guidance. The role of evaluator is not meant to be adversarial or confrontational.

Evaluation needs to be considered in the exercise management process from the initial concept development. During this phase, evaluation needs to inform and support the development of the aim and objectives. Exercise planners need to revisit objectives throughout the planning process to ensure they can still be achieved.

External evaluators may contribute their subject-matter expertise from outside the agency to be evaluated, and must therefore understand jurisdictional and agency variations.

## Assigning evaluators

During deployment exercises, evaluators will be assigned to observe different activities based on their subject-matter expertise. They may be assigned to look only at individual tasks or capabilities. They may be asked to look at organisations or at particular functions across the exercise or organisations (e.g. command within an organisation or command, control, coordination, communication and information management across an agency or across multiple agencies).

A deployment exercise master schedule of events provides a timeline and location for all expected exercise events. Reference to a master schedule of events can help the evaluation coordinator determine the times at which specific evaluators should be at certain locations. Evaluator assignments should be decided on, recorded and communicated to evaluators before the exercise is conducted.

## Briefing and training evaluators

Evaluators will need to be briefed and may also need to be trained before the exercise. Briefing/training should address all aspects of the exercise, including the exercise aim and objectives; the scenario; participants; and evaluator roles, responsibilities and assignments. During or before the training, evaluators should be provided with copies of the following materials to review:

- exercise documents, such as the scenario for discussion-based exercises or the exercise plan, evaluation plan and master schedule of events for deployment exercises
- evaluation materials and tools and evaluator assignments
- appropriate plans, policies, procedures, legislation and agreements of the exercising organisation(s).

Any training provided should also address the roles and responsibilities of evaluators during the various stages of an exercise.

Evaluator responsibilities include the following:

- Pre-exercise:
  - examine the exercise aim, objectives and exercise instructions
  - identify key and trigger points of the activity
  - develop a data collection plan to enable objective reporting on the performance of capabilities against the stated objectives (through demonstrated performance and evidence).
- During exercise:
  - gather evidence to be able to demonstrate/report on performance within the specific capability
  - participate in scheduled meetings/briefings as required
  - act as a forward observer for EXCON staff to report on activities in real time versus exercise time
  - where requested and after consultation with EXCON staff, provide injects to the exercise to help exercise flow
  - be contactable
  - provide feedback to participants and clarify observations made (e.g. through hot debrief)
  - assess situational awareness of participants
  - assess flow of information and analyse root cause of problems
  - consult with other evaluators about the effect of good or poor performance.

- Post-exercise:
  - compile and review the data collected to make comments and recommendations
  - analyse and summarise outcomes
  - develop treatment options
  - identify good as well as poor performance
  - transfer and articulate findings in the post-exercise report.

## Conduct evaluator briefings

The evaluation coordinator should brief evaluators to ensure roles, responsibilities and assignments are understood. For functional and field exercises, this briefing often includes a tour of the exercise site so that evaluators become familiar with the venue and know where they should position themselves to best observe exercise activity.

## Development of an evaluation plan

The evaluation plan should contain the following:

- exercise information
- aim, objectives, scope and focus of the evaluation (these may be different from those of the exercise)
- key evaluation questions
- methods for data collection and analysis
- security, safety and ethics
- risk management strategy
- evaluator preparation – training, briefings etc.
- reporting requirements
- timeframes
- aide-memoires, evaluation tools.

An evaluation plan template is provided at Appendix 14.

Some example evaluation questions are provided at Appendix 20.

## Observe the exercise and collect data

Exercise observations and data collection can differ between discussion and functional/field exercises.

## Discussion exercises

Discussion exercises tend to focus on higher-level issues involving the plans, policies and procedures of an organisation/jurisdiction. As such, many discussion exercises break participants into syndicate groups to facilitate smaller group discussions. In these smaller group discussions, evaluators and/or scribes may need to be present to record proceedings and capture observations and outcomes.



After the syndicate groups have finished their discussions, the entire group usually reconvenes in plenary to address any multi-agency issues or conflicting opinions. Although individual evaluators are assigned to record discussions within a designated group, all evaluators should capture the information aired in this open discussion.

A debrief with the exercise planning team, facilitators and evaluators should be held immediately afterwards to collect observations and thoughts about the exercise conduct. This will provide an opportunity for evaluators to clarify any points.

Following the exercise, evaluators may also supplement the data collected during the discussions by collecting additional data from participants through interviews or questionnaires.

## Functional/field exercises

Evaluation of deployment exercises requires observations to take place where the exercise activities are occurring. After an exercise, the information recorded by evaluators is used to analyse whether or not the activities and tasks were successfully performed and the objectives achieved.

During exercises, evaluators need to keep accurate records of their observations. Evaluators should take detailed notes as well as consider other means of recording data, such as the use of personal recording devices. Any electronic recording of exercises should be in accordance with the policies/procedures of the participating organisations.

Because numerous exercise activities may be occurring simultaneously, evaluators need to plan to be placed to observe those activities most relevant to the objectives they are evaluating.

Some examples of evaluators' observations include:

- any deviations from plans or procedures
- timeliness of response/completion of tasks
- effectiveness of, or shortcomings in, command and control
- processes and arrangements that work well and should be maintained
- and/or enhanced
- creative, adaptive problem solving
- equipment issues that affect participant efforts
- exercise management issues that affect the ability of participants to achieve objectives.

Evaluators should not interfere with or disrupt the conduct of the exercise. However, it may be necessary for an evaluator to interact with participants during the exercise if he or she has a question about something observed. These questions should not influence the manner in which participants respond to the scenario and be as brief as possible.

## Collecting supplementary data

The evaluation team may wish to collect additional data immediately after the exercise. For example, useful sources of information could include logs, message forms and maps. These records can help evaluators validate their observations and identify the effect of inaccurate information on performance.

## Develop exercise evaluation documents

These can include:

- evaluation plan
- data collection tools
- information for evaluators
- evaluation report templates.

Evaluation templates that may be populated with the questions/objectives of the evaluation have been provided (see Appendix 17). These can form a useful guide for evaluators to ensure they are gathering the correct evidence to evaluate performance relative to the objectives.

## Guidance for templates

Once the evaluation plan (see Appendix 6) is written it can be submitted to the relevant approving body for sign off.

The data collection plan template is simply a means for evaluators to develop an aide-memoire for themselves to ensure they are:

- observing the correct activities
- in the right place at the right time
- covering all the information required to report against the objectives
- aware of any relevant standards or measures that need to be applied to performance.

When completed before an exercise, they may also identify issues or questions that must be resolved before the exercise starts so that the evaluation can be conducted effectively.

The evaluator report template (see Appendix 18) provides guidance on what needs to be reported against following the activity, and contains several important sections that are briefly described here.

## Observations

These are records of the noteworthy facts or occurrences from the activity: they form the evidence for the evaluation conclusions.

Important observations should be recorded in terms of (a) what worked well and why, and (b) what didn't work

well and why. This identifies both good performance and areas for improvement to support the learning and development of individuals and capabilities.

Initial analysis and summarising of data can include use of the P<sup>2</sup>OST<sup>2</sup>E elements of capability to help identify the root causes of any observed issues/performance gaps (see the P<sup>2</sup>OST<sup>2</sup>E table in Appendix 19).

## Issues

A matter drawn from the evidence (observations) collected that needs to be further considered. These are generally negative, flagging problems associated with performance.

## Treatment options

Potential solutions for addressing issues identified during the activity. These are optional rather than mandatory – they should only be included if they are concrete, realistic and feasible.

Each of these areas is reported relative to each objective, and for each there is also a section detailing whether the objective was achieved or not (or partially), accompanied by a summary of why (or why not).

The report is prefaced with an executive summary (for which there is guidance in the template) that summarises what the exercise was, what was being evaluated, whether the capability was successful overall in the achievement of its objectives, and what the identified issues and treatment options were.

## Information for evaluators

This simply refers to any SOPs, jurisdictional/capability or other materials relevant to the activity that evaluators need to be aware of to conduct the evaluation accurately and meaningfully. This information may be given in various forms, including printed/electronic documents or verbal briefings.

## Analyse data

During data analysis, the evaluation team consolidates the data collected during the exercise and identifies demonstrated strengths and areas for improvement. Functional and field exercises tend to yield higher amounts of data than discussion-based exercises and thus require a more comprehensive data analysis phase.

## Identifying root cause and developing recommendations

To ensure the exercise evaluation process produces a report that produces useful, actionable outcomes for improving an organisation's capabilities, it is critical for

evaluators to discover not only what happened, but why it happened. Each task not completed as expected offers evaluators the opportunity to search for a root cause. A root cause is the source of or underlying reason behind an identified issue. To arrive at a root cause, an evaluator should attempt to trace the origin of each event back to earlier events and their respective causes. Root cause analysis may also require the review and evaluation of an organisation's emergency plans, policies and procedures.

Uncovering root causes enables the development of actionable solutions that can be described in the subsequent exercise report. While these solutions are based on the evaluation team's experience and best judgement, the responsibility for implementing recommendations ultimately lies with the participating organisations.

## Conducting analysis

Following any debriefs, evaluators should review their notes and begin to develop preliminary analyses of the exercise.

When conducting an analysis evaluators should consider:

- Were the objectives achieved?
- Were organisations able to successfully fulfil their roles and responsibilities? If not, why?
- What were the key decision/trigger points?
- Were any resource issues identified?
- Do the current plans, policies and procedures support an effective response to an event? Were participants familiar with the relevant plans, policies and procedures?
- Were there any multi-agency coordination issues that need to be addressed?
- What should be learned from this exercise?
- What strengths were identified?
- What areas for improvement were identified?

## Develop the exercise report

Any exercise evaluation should result in the development of an exercise report, however brief, that describes what happened, good performance and areas for improvement, and makes recommendations. For a small exercise there may be one evaluator who produces a one-page report. For a large exercise there may be a number of individual evaluator reports that need to be analysed and summarised into the final exercise report. The exercise evaluation team may be asked to draft the exercise report. Exercise reports should be produced to effect change and improvements. They do not have to be long/large to do that. Exercise reports should clearly identify areas/issues to be improved and/or enhanced. They should include enough context for each issue or provide links to that context (e.g. individual evaluator reports as

annexes). If treatment options or recommendations are known they can be included. The length of the report is not likely to increase its effectiveness.

The exercise report should contain the following:

- Introduction – executive summary
- Background – aim, objectives, scope, participating organisations
- Evaluation – commentary on objectives (observations, recommendations)
- Conclusions.

A template containing a suggested format is included at Appendix 21.

The exercise director is responsible for finalising the exercise report and submitting it to those responsible for approving/releasing it and then to those responsible for resolving the issues that have been identified.

## Resolution of evaluation findings

The resolution process should involve (as a minimum) the following steps:

- Identify the findings/issues and the improvements or remedial activities required.
  - Where issues have been identified and validated, existing treatment options should be considered as well as alternatives that are appropriate to the organisation and its development goals.
- Finalise the report.
  - The draft report should be reviewed and any necessary amendments made so it can be finalised and distributed to the appropriate individuals, units or organisations.
- Track implementation of the corrective action plan.
  - Where a corrective action plan has been developed (i.e. a plan for implementing remedial training/equipment enhancements/revised SOPs), an individual should be asked to track the plan's progress or specific actions within it. That is, the corrective action plan should have a timeline for implementation and those responsible should report on progress at appropriate intervals to ensure the momentum in enhancing the capability (through addressing identified performance problems) is not lost.

---

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 – CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT MEETING TEMPLATE

### AGENDA

**AIM:** To discuss, agree on and further develop the broad exercise concept and key parameters including aim, objectives, evaluation concept, core dates, exercise localities and participants.

**INPUTS:** Exercise scoping documents

**OUTCOME:** General agreement and sufficient guidance to develop the exercise concept document.

### AGENDA:

1. Aim of the exercise
2. Objectives for the exercise
3. Planning milestones, key events and related activities
4. Participating agencies and level of participation
5. Planning limitations and risk assessment
6. Resource requirements
7. Action plan

---

# APPENDIX 2 – INITIAL PLANNING MEETING TEMPLATE

## AGENDA

**AIM:** To agree on and refine the exercise parameters as presented in the exercise concept document.

**INPUTS:** Exercise concept document

**OUTCOMES:** Broad agreement on the exercise parameters and sufficient guidance to refine the exercise plan before final endorsement.

### AGENDA:

1. Business arising from the concept development meeting
2. Review exercise concept
3. Refine objectives and identify standards/measures
4. Determine dates, duration and location(s) of exercise-related activities
5. Determine aims and objectives for each activity
6. Determine management arrangements for each activity
7. For each exercise-related activity, determine participation to prepare relevant invitations to attend
8. Determine EXCON arrangements and determine staffing requirements for:
  - a. exercise control team (EXCON)
9. Determine logistical requirements and identify staff for:
  - a. logistics team
  - b. administration and support
10. Determine public relations and media requirements and identify staff for:
  - a. public relations and media team
11. Determine exercise evaluation requirements and identify staff for: a. exercise evaluation team
12. Determine exercise writing requirements and identify staff for: a. exercise writing team(s)
13. Determine actions and allocate responsibilities

(Agenda may need to be tailored to suit multiple activity and single exercise programs)

---

# APPENDIX 3 – MID PLANNING MEETING TEMPLATE

## AGENDA

**AIM:** Refine exercise management arrangements and review the status of exercise planning including major issues. At the conclusion of the mid planning meeting those appointed to the various exercise management teams should have sufficient detail to initiate their respective activities.

### INPUTS:

- Endorsed exercise concept document
- Exercise plan
- Activities list
- Activity summary sheet(s)
- Draft activity (or exercise) instructions
- Draft scenario documents

**OUTCOMES:** Broad agreement on exercise management plans and sufficient guidance to refine the exercise instruction(s) before endorsement.

Confirmation of exercise scenario and agreed master schedule of events.

### AGENDA:

1. Business arising from the initial planning meeting
2. Review any further development to the exercise concept
3. Confirm exercise objectives and standards/measures
4. Confirmation of scenario detail and documentation requirements
5. Review EXCON arrangements, including:
  - a. EXCON structure and appointments
  - b. facilitators
  - c. public relations and media
  - d. visitor and observer arrangements
6. Further develop logistical and administration requirements
7. Determine actions to be achieved before the final planning meeting and allocate responsibilities

(Agenda may need to be tailored to suit multiple activity and single exercise programs)

---

# APPENDIX 4 – FINAL PLANNING MEETING TEMPLATE

## AGENDA

**AIM:** Review all exercise planning and confirm that planning is complete.

**INPUTS:**

- Activity (and/or Exercise) Instructions
- Scenario documents

**OUTCOMES:** Identify and resolve any outstanding issues.

**AGENDA:**

1. Confirm key exercise management arrangements, including revised or additional matters
2. Confirm timing of remaining key milestones and/or activities
3. Validate the exercise scenario and associated documentation
4. Identify and resolve outstanding issues

(Agenda may need to be tailored to suit multiple activity and single exercise programs)

---

# APPENDIX 5 – POST-EXERCISE MEETING TEMPLATE

## AGENDA

**AIM:** Finalise the exercise program and related reports.

### INPUTS:

- Facilitator(s) checklists and exercise notes
- Exercise debrief notes
- Draft exercise report

### OUTCOMES:

- Finalised exercise report
- Recommendations for future exercise programs
- Identified arrangements for implementing recommendations

### AGENDA:

1. Review exercise planning:
  - a. concept development
  - b. detailed planning
  - c. conduct
  - d. post-exercise
2. Review exercise report
3. Process for dissemination of exercise report
4. Recommendations for future activities
5. Arrangements for implementation of recommendations



---

# APPENDIX 6 – EXERCISE CONCEPT DOCUMENT TEMPLATE

## Exercise (insert name) Concept document

### **Need**

*Summary of the need to conduct this exercise.*

### **Overview**

*Short paragraph, what this exercise is to achieve.*

*What is the target audience?*

### **Aim**

*One sentence.*

### **Exercise objectives**

### **Exercise scope**

*What is included; what is excluded.*

### **Exercise outline**

*Type, styles, phases etc. No need for scenario at this point. Could include theme that is proposed to use to meet the objectives.*

### **Governance and management structure**

*Exercise director(s)*

*Organisation chart and appointments for planning phase and outline for conduct phase*

### **Participating agencies**

### **Public information**

*Strategic direction and responsibility for real and pseudo media*

*What is the public message, if any.*

### **Evaluation**

*Focus areas/approach*

### **Budget**

### **Timeline**

### **Point of contact**

### **Approval / by / date**

# APPENDIX 7 – EXERCISE PLAN TEMPLATE

The purpose of the exercise plan is to outline the method (with the exercise planning team's agreement) by which the exercise will be designed, conducted and evaluated. Suggested content for the exercise plan includes:

SECTION	HEADINGS
INTRODUCTION	Background Aim of the exercise Objectives Standards/measures Scope References Participants Roles and responsibilities
EXERCISE FORMAT	Exercise name Exercise type Scenario (outline only)
GOVERNANCE	Exercise planning team organisational structure
PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES	Activities (including meetings, briefings, workshops, training etc.) Timings Locations
EXERCISE CONTROL	Exercise control (EXCON) staff (appointments and responsibilities) Briefings Documentation Communication Safety and security Media and visitors Exercise termination (and exit strategy)
EXERCISE EVALUATION	Purpose of evaluation Process of evaluation Exercise debriefs Exercise reporting
ADMINISTRATION	Costs/budget Logistical requirements Travel and accommodation Catering
ATTACHMENTS	Exercise outputs Exercise program or timetable EXCON staff (responsibilities) Exercise briefings (rationale and content) Exercise facilities (diagrams and equipment details) Roles and responsibilities (checklist)

# APPENDIX 8 – PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK TEMPLATE

## Exercise (insert name)

### Introduction

- Handling instructions (security classification)

### Background information

- Overview
- Aim
- Exercise objectives
- Exercise format
- Exercise context
- Exercise assumptions
  - In-exercise/out-of-exercise areas
  - No-go zones
- Participant guidance

### Situation

- General idea
- Technical briefs/detail
- Maps

### Command and control

- EXCON
  - Facilitators
  - Evaluators
  - Points of contact
- Participant command, control and coordination
  - What levels are playing
  - How to interact with EXCON
  - Refer to exercise contact directory

### Administration and logistics

- Exercise dates and locations
- Travel arrangements
- Accommodation
- Climate conditions
- Dress code
- Entry and security procedures
- Catering
- Communication
- Points of contact
- Expenses
  - Incurring/approval of expenditure
  - Allowances and claims
- Safety instructions
  - Risk

### Participating agencies

#### Pre-exercise activity

- Pre-exercise training
- Briefings
- Activity schedule

#### Post-exercise activity

- Debriefings
- Evaluation

#### Attachment – if required

- Communication instructions
- Timeline
- Contact directory
- Risk assessment or summary if applicable

---

# APPENDIX 9 – EXERCISE CONTROL INSTRUCTIONS TEMPLATE

Exercise (insert name)

## **Exercise control**

- EXCON staff (appointments and responsibilities)
- EXCON facilities
- Exercise briefings
- Time zones
- Communication
- Media and visitors
- Exercise termination (and exit strategy)
- Exercise facilities (diagrams and equipment details)



# APPENDIX 11 – MASTER SCHEDULE OF EVENTS TEMPLATE

EXERCISE (Insert Name)	Serial	Day	Date	Time	Location	Event	Live or Notional	Desired Outcome	Control Docs	Resources	Responsible	Completed
<b>ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS</b>												
<b>EXERCISE PHASE</b>												
						Commencement of Exercise		Exercise Start				
								ENDEX				
<b>ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS</b>												

# APPENDIX 12 – EXERCISE INPUT TEMPLATE

(Insert exercise name)

## INCIDENT/INFORMATION INPUT

---

Message number:

---

Date/time of inject: \_\_\_\_\_ Time injected: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Injection means:            phone/fax/email/other

---

From:

---

To:

---

### *Message:*

*(Insert enough detail to allow the person inputting the message to field any immediate enquiries that may come from the input)*

### *Attachments:*

*(Insert details of attachments that accompany this input)*

### *Instructions:*

*(Insert enough detail for helping an exercise controller, facilitator or evaluator to follow-up on this input, if required)*

---

# APPENDIX 13 – CONTROL DOCUMENT TEMPLATE

CONTROL DOCUMENT #1

EXERCISE XXXXXX

EXERCISE MATERIAL ONLY

-----EXERCISE MATERIAL ENDS-----



# APPENDIX 14 – EXERCISE EVALUATION PLAN TEMPLATE

## Exercise evaluation plan

(insert exercise name)

### 1. Introduction

Include a discussion (if relevant) of the:

- background to the exercise to be evaluated (including name and dates of the proposed activity and areas of the activity to be evaluated)
- the consequent need for evaluation (i.e. the problem(s) or issue(s) that require resolution or a decision)
- what has led to the evaluation being conducted (e.g. identified gap, previous exercise outcomes etc.)
- what areas of the activity will be evaluated
- brief overview of what the evaluation report will cover
- other relevant background information as appropriate.

### 2. Use of the evaluation

How will the information produced from the evaluation be used? What decisions will be influenced by the evaluation and who will make those decisions? OR What issues will be clarified?

### 3. Management of the evaluation

**Responsible body:** The body which is approving the activity being evaluated and will receive the report. Identify responsible body and outline role and responsibilities. This will normally be the exercise management or planning team.

**Evaluation coordinator:** The person who plans the evaluation and manages the evaluation on a day-to-day basis. Identify evaluation coordinator and outline role and responsibilities.

**Evaluators:** The other people who will be conducting the evaluation, under the direction of the evaluation coordinator. Identify evaluators (if possible) and outline roles and responsibilities.

### 4. Aim of the evaluation

What is the overall aim or intent of the evaluation (as opposed to the aim of the exercise – may be the same or different)? What information will be collected and what will be learned?

### 5. Parameters of the evaluation

The following matters are **IN** scope:

The following matters are **OUT** of scope:

### 6. Key question(s)

**Note:** in the evaluation of an exercise the key questions will generally be the exercise objectives, rephrased as questions.

What question(s) is the evaluation is trying to answer? May require more than one question, but there should be no more than three to five key questions.

Answers to the key question(s) will form the body of the evaluation report.

### 7. Sub-questions

Only include if necessary – may not be required in the evaluation of minor activities.

For each key evaluation question, identify sub-questions that will generate information to describe or measure specific aspects of the key question. Taken together, answers to the sub-questions should answer that key question.

**Note:** in the evaluation of an exercise these will closely reflect sub-objectives, but will be phrased as questions.

### 8. Methods

This section is used to identify the methods (data collection and analysis) that will be used to answer the sub-questions.

#### 8.a Data collection

Outline the methods and arrangements for collecting data.

Often useful to attach a matrix showing which methods will be applied to answer each sub-question.

Where necessary, include arrangements and timetable for the following:

- distribution of material (questionnaires/surveys, data collection templates etc.)
- appointments for interviews
- equipment requirements
- validation processes.

## 8.b Analysis

Outline the methods and arrangements for analysing the data. Where necessary, include the following:

- who will conduct the analysis (including possible use of external people if applicable)
- how the analysis will be conducted (e.g. collating and reviewing evaluator reports to identify capability gaps)
- resource requirements.

## 9. Quality control

Outline the process for overall quality control. Possible mechanisms include:

- regular debriefs with users during data collection and analysis
- workshops/conferences to review data and its interpretation
- agreed criteria for terms such as 'timely', 'appropriate', 'efficient' or 'successful'
- cross-checking evidence, findings and recommendations.

**Note:** what quality control mechanisms are appropriate will depend on what is feasible and sufficient.

## 10. Security, safety and ethics

Outline of the arrangements for managing security, safety and ethical issues that relate to the evaluation.

## 11. Key risks/mitigation strategy

At a minimum, briefly discuss what could go wrong (in the evaluation not the exercise) and what steps will be taken to mitigate. Only include a detailed risk assessment (including risk matrix) if necessary.

## 12. Communication strategy

Outline a communication strategy for the evaluation. Include details of any briefings or workshops to develop recommendations.

## 13. Evaluator preparation

Training requirements

Briefing requirements

Awareness of jurisdiction or agency legislation, arrangements, policy, plans, SOPs

## 14. Report

Identify a distribution list for both the draft and final reports.

## 15. Resources

Budget/administrative

Guidance (e.g. policy and templates)

Evaluators

## 16. Timeframe

- Evaluation plan by
- Fieldwork between
- Analysis between
- Draft report by
- Final report by

Attachment [\*] – Evaluator Requirements

Attachment [\*] – Key contacts for evaluators and mentors

Attachment [\*] – Evaluator aide memoire

Attachment [\*] – Exercise evaluator briefing - content

Appendix \*: Evaluator data collection plan

Appendix \*: Evaluator report template

# APPENDIX 15 – EVALUATOR AIDE MEMOIRE TEMPLATE

## Attachment [\*] to evaluation plan

### Evaluator aide memoire

The following evaluation checklist describes the evaluator's responsibilities before, during and after the exercise.

#### Before the exercise:

- Review the exercise plan, scenario, master schedule of events, evaluation sub-plan, safety/risk instructions and other exercise documents, with special emphasis on the objectives, standards and key issues identified to facilitate data collection.
- Complete evaluator training/briefing requirements.
- Familiarise yourself with the legislation, plans, policies, procedures, and processes applicable to your assigned location/jurisdiction/agency/capability.
- Familiarise yourself with the exercise communications and IT systems and tools.
- Identify and review the templates you may be required to fill out.
- Attend the EXCON and evaluator briefing at your assigned location.

#### On arrival at start of shift:

- Check in with the evaluation coordinator.
- Receive a shift change brief from the outgoing evaluator if applicable.
- Check in with exercise participants to advise you are on site (incident controller or similar).

#### During the exercise:

- Observe the exercise and record your observations.
- Identify schedule for and attend evaluator briefings/conferences/teleconferences.
- Identify schedule for and attend key operational briefings/conferences/ teleconferences and other key events as per your collection plan.
- You may need to interview participants to clarify events and gain insight into decisions and actions.

- Collect supplementary data, which may include the following:
  - situation reports, intelligence summaries, briefings, debriefings
  - logs/running sheets (e.g. communications log, daily log)
  - requests for Information (RFI) and RFI logs
  - media releases
  - technical data products (e.g. GIS products, maps, plume model results)
  - incident action plans and other planning documents
  - quantitative data (times, numbers, equipment, resources).

Be sure to note the date and time of each piece of supplementary information along with your location (reference points) so it can be related back to the relevant part of the exercise.

- Collect participant feedback forms, where used, for those personnel whose exercise involvement is completed.

#### During downtime, after your shift or after ENDEX:

- Progress the completion of the applicable templates

#### At the end of shift:

- Conduct a shift change brief with your replacement.
- Contact the evaluation coordinator at EXCON to advise your status.

#### After ENDEX:

- Attend and document relevant debriefs.
- Participate in the EXCON debriefs.
- Collect any remaining participant feedback forms.
- Complete exercise report.
- Forward your completed report to the evaluation coordinator by the agreed date.

# APPENDIX 16 – EXERCISE EVALUATOR BRIEFING TEMPLATE

## Attachment [\*] to evaluation plan

### Exercise evaluator briefings

#### PART A

##### Evaluator specific briefing(s)

1. General overview of exercise
2. Exercise aim
3. Exercise objectives
  - a. What is the jurisdiction/agency trying to get out of the exercise
  - b. What are the key focus areas (strategic/operational/tactical)
  - c. What should evaluators be focusing on or not
  - d. What is being tested
  - e. Last-minute changes
4. Scope of exercise
5. Exercise parameters
  - a. Agencies participating and their role
  - b. Agencies not participating
  - c. Notional agency involvement
  - d. Notional elements/exercise management artificiality
  - e. Relevant exercise history/exercise manager's rationale for why particular aspects/activities are included (or not included)
  - f. Any previously identified issues/lessons learned that are being revisited
6. Jurisdiction/organisation arrangements/current issues
  - a. Environment: organisational, jurisdictional, political
7. Scenario
  - a. Master schedule
  - b. Critical scenario developments/key timings
  - c. Key events relevant to evaluators

8. Exercise management structure
  - a. Key timings
  - b. Briefings/meetings
  - c. Evaluator brief/debrief times
9. Evaluator administration
  - a. General instructions
  - b. Administration details
  - c. Meals
  - d. Accommodation
  - e. Security/access
  - f. Transport/hire cars
  - g. Identification/tabards
10. Questions

#### PART B

##### Agency/capability-specific briefing/discussions

1. Evaluators to visit/meet with the relevant agency/capability area to discuss specific details
2. Detail of agency/capability objectives
3. Critical scenario developments/key timings for that agency/capability
4. Focus areas
5. Discuss/agree evaluator role

#### PART C

##### General exercise briefings that evaluators need to attend

1. Safety
2. Risk assessment/management
3. Communications
4. Logistics
5. Media
6. Site visits
7. Other relevant meetings/briefings
8. Role player briefings
9. Debrief(s)

# APPENDIX 17 – EVALUATOR DATA COLLECTION PLAN TEMPLATE

## Evaluator data collection plan templates

### Option A:

(Exercise name) evaluator data collection plan

Name of agency/capability or function: (agency/capability name)

Date and time	MSE line item number	Objective	Relevant measure/standard	Observation location

**Option B:**

(Exercise name) evaluator data collection plan

Name of agency/capability or function: (agency/capability name)

<b>Objective 1:</b>				
Measures and standards:	MSE item	Time	Location	Description
<b>Objective 2:</b>				
Measures and standards:	MSE item	Time	Location	Description
<b>Objective 3:</b>				
Measures and standards:	MSE item	Time	Location	Description

# APPENDIX 18 – EVALUATOR REPORT TEMPLATE

## (AGENCY/CAPABILITY) evaluator report

### (exercise name)

**Author(s):** (include title, given and surnames, post-nominals, agency and position within agency)

### Executive summary

A maximum of one page that covers the following key things:

1. A short paragraph introducing the exercise in terms of:
  - time, date, place, participants, exercise type and budget
  - aim of exercise
2. What was being evaluated
3. A comment on the overall success or not of the capability(ies) as part of the exercise
4. List issues identified and treatment options (or summarise if there are numerous)

Note: The executive summary should only be written once you have completed your analysis and summary of evidence.

### Summary of evidence

For each objective, put your analysed data into these tables against each relevant objective.

Objective 1:	Write each objective into one of these boxes
OBSERVATIONS	
What worked well and why What went well? What worked? Why did it go well/work? What was good about it?	
What didn't work well and why (categorise each point by P <sup>2</sup> OST <sup>2</sup> E) What didn't work? Why didn't these things work? What effect did this have?	
ISSUE(S)	
What are the issues arising from your analysis of your observations?	
TREATMENT OPTION(S)	
What are the potential treatment options (if any) for the issues you have identified?	
Was the objective achieved: yes no partially Was the objective achieved overall – may be any of these three options.	
Why/why not A summary of why you have concluded that the objective was/was not/was partially achieved...	

### Any other comments

Discuss any other important issues that were observed during the exercise and how they affected the achievement of exercise objectives.

<<Signature block>>

# APPENDIX 19 – P<sup>2</sup>OST<sup>2</sup>E ELEMENTS OF CAPABILITY TEMPLATE

Each of these elements is present in all capabilities, and breaking down issues into their basic P<sup>2</sup>OST<sup>2</sup>E elements can help to identify root causes for problems, as well as viable treatment options. This is an important aspect of the resolution stage of any activity, because the causes of problems (rather than the observable symptoms) must be addressed so that these problems may be remedied for future activities.

<b>People</b>	Roles, responsibilities, accountabilities, skills
<b>Process</b>	Plans, policies, procedures, processes
<b>Organisation</b>	Structure, jurisdiction
<b>Support</b>	Infrastructure, facilities, maintenance
<b>Technology</b>	Equipment, systems, standards, security, inter-operability
<b>Training</b>	Capability qualifications/skill levels, identification of required courses
<b>Exercise management</b>	Exercise development, structure, management, conduct



# APPENDIX 20 – EXAMPLE EVALUATION QUESTIONS TEMPLATE

There are two types of questions drawn from previous activities shown here:

1. Exercise management evaluation questions
2. Performance evaluation questions

## 1. Exercise management evaluation

For the evaluation of a multi-agency exercise, the following questions and sub questions have been used.

A. Does the exercise format allow the achievement of objectives?

A1. Does the format of the exercise provide value given the resources allocated to it?

A2. Did the level of involvement from agencies support the focus of the exercise?

A3. Did the pre-deployment discussion exercise contribute to achieving the exercise objectives? (If applicable)

B. Assess the planning process for this exercise.

B1. Was the length of planning time appropriate?

B2. Were the number, sequence and nature of meetings appropriate?

B3. Was the governance structure appropriate?

B4. Were appropriate tools and systems in place to support the planning process?

B5. Was there consistent situational awareness across all exercise functions?

B6. Was there a process for monitoring ongoing changes that affected the exercise?

B7. Was the objective-setting process appropriate and did they contribute to the focus areas?

C. Evaluate the reporting process for this exercise.

C1. Was the reporting time line appropriate and was it adhered to?

C2. Did the reporting process facilitate the analysis of agency reports and their contribution to the objectives?

Exercise management evaluations may also include the evaluation of exercise control, and the following types of questions are commonly used.

A. Evaluate exercise control command, management and coordination functions, with a focus on structure, coordination staff and shift requirements.

B. Evaluate the information and communications technology required to support exercise control operations – include use of technology (i.e. computers, phones,

data projectors, display boards) and the display of key information (e.g. master log)

C. Evaluate the physical facilities required to support exercise control – space for main control room and additional meeting/briefing rooms, layout, support, catering, security etc

D. Evaluate the requirements to manage exercise control forward – numbers & locations, command/control/communication requirements (e.g. management from EXCON and within the Forward area, coordination of exercise play against the Master Schedule).

## 2. Performance evaluation questions

Below are sample questions used in the evaluation of capabilities during previous exercises. Some of the more complex evaluation questions have a series of sub questions associated with them.

A. Evaluate the effectiveness of the establishment of first responder command, control and coordination arrangements.

B. Examine the Country Fire Authority (CFA)'s capability to deploy hazmat resources and combat a hazmat incident on a large scale.

B1. Was the logistical management of hazmat resources appropriate?

B2. What is the ability of the CFA to maintain a long term commitment to a large scale hazmat event?

B3. Was the inter-service deployment of hazmat and chemical, biological and radiological (CBR) resources appropriate?

B4. Was the interstate deployment of hazmat and CBR resources appropriate?

B5. Is there interoperability in the fire service technical hazmat equipment?

C. Was procedural guidance for the management and operation of the State Operations Centre (SOC) and Regional Operations Centre (ROC) capabilities provided?

---

C1. Did participants ensure that the incident was managed in accordance with the Australian Interagency Incident management System (AIIMS)?

C2. Did participants ensure that the appropriate incident descriptor was implemented?

C3. Did participants ensure that the SOC maintained an overview of operations resources and response capability?

C4. Did participants ensure that the SOC was activated and manned in a timely manner?

C5. Did participants ensure the activation of the ROC for immediate operation in support of any type of emergency (ref: ROC, ph 14)?

C6. Did participants ensure that operational preparedness levels were reviewed?

D. What is the CFA's ability and capacity to apply Victoria's emergency management arrangements, with a particular focus on command and control?

D1. What is the CFA's role in Part 3 of the Emergency Management Manual Victoria (EMMV)?

D2. Were command and control arrangements implemented and adhered to?

E. Assess the command, control and coordination of emergency agencies at a building collapse incident.

E1. Did the Forward Command Post personnel demonstrate a good knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of the agencies and work together in a cooperative and collaborative manner?

E2. Was there effective information flow between the Forward Command Post and the Taskforce Leader?

E3. Were detailed briefings provided by the Taskforce Leader to the Taskforce on the objectives, strategies and tactics?

# APPENDIX 21 – EXERCISE REPORT TEMPLATE

Suggested list of contents:

SECTION	HEADINGS
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	(Introduces the exercise in the form of an executive summary)
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Background to the exercise</li><li>• Exercise management</li><li>• Exercise aim</li><li>• Expected exercise objectives</li><li>• Exercise scope</li><li>• Participating organisations</li></ul>
<b>EVALUATION REPORT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Structure of the report</li><li>• Commentary (for each outcome)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Objective</li><li>– Rationale for objective</li><li>– Observations</li><li>– Recommendations</li></ul></li></ul>
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	(Summary of the key findings and evaluator’s comments)
<b>ATTACHMENTS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consolidated list of recommendations</li><li>• Glossary of terminology and acronyms</li><li>• Exercise diagrams</li></ul>

# GLOSSARY

## **Agency presentation**

A discussion forum where participants present an action plan relevant to their agency's operational function. The agency is provided with the scenario and problems or issues in advance so that it may prepare its presentation.

## **Aim**

A statement of intent that gives direction to what will or is desired to be achieved by the exercise.

## **Damage control officer**

A member of the exercise staff whose role is to manage damage to resources or the environment before, during and after an exercise.

## **Endex**

A code word that can be communicated to exercise participants to indicate the end of the exercise.

## **Exercise control (EXCON) staff – also known as directing staff**

A term for the person or persons who manage the conduct phase of the exercise.

## **Exercise staff**

Everyone involved with the management of the exercise (planning, conduct, evaluation).

## **Discussion exercise (DISCEX)**

An exercise built around discussion of a scenario – providing an opportunity to explore issues in some depth and give verbal responses to situations.

Discussion exercises focus on senior staff or other key personnel and are designed to stimulate discussion of issues. They may be used to assess plans, policies and procedures.

## **Drill exercise**

A coordinated, supervised activity employed to test a single, specific operation or function in a single or multi-agency environment. Drills are commonly used to provide training on new equipment, develop or validate new policies or procedures, or practise and maintain current skills.

## **Evaluator**

Members of the exercise control staff responsible for assessing performance against the exercise objectives (previously referred to as umpires).

## **Exercise**

A controlled, objective-driven activity used for testing, practising or evaluating processes or capabilities.

## **Exercise controller**

The person who manages the conduct phase of an exercise.

## **Exercise director**

Provides strategic oversight and direction for the planning, conduct and evaluation of the exercise. The exercise director is responsible for approving the aim and objectives of the exercise, as well as its supporting documentation, including the concept document, exercise plan and exercise instructions.

## **Exercise planning team**

The person or group of people who have overall responsibility for the detailed planning of the exercise.

## **Field exercise**

An exercise that involves the deployment of personnel to a simulated incident or emergency.

## **Functional exercise**

A functional exercise is designed to test or practise individual functions such as command, planning or intelligence.

In a functional exercise, participants actually undertake the particular functions

or tasks they would perform as part of the role(s) they are playing in the exercise. Functional exercises normally take place in a simulated operational environment (e.g. a control centre or command post), are usually conducted in real time, and scenario information is fed to the participants in a manner similar to the way they would receive it 'in the real world'.

## **General idea**

A statement designed to provide participants with the background information which would normally be available as general knowledge in a real incident or emergency.

## Hypothetical exercise

A type of discussion exercise where problems are posed by a facilitator and considered by a panel of individuals 'on their feet'. The facilitator keeps the activity moving by asking probing questions and introducing events, often unexpected, as the scenario unfolds. Hypothetical exercises are often conducted in front of an audience of emergency managers or stakeholders. Hypothetical exercises require highly skilled facilitators with subject-matter expertise.

## Master schedule of events (MSE)

A detailed list of all activities and actions (script or running sheet) that need to occur for the exercise objectives to be achieved.

## Moulage

The make-up applied to exercise role players as simulated casualties, to add realism.

## No Duff

The preferred term for indicating that a real event or injury has occurred during an exercise.

## Notional events

EXCON may deem an event that would occur in a real event, but is unable to be undertaken in the exercise for practical reasons, as notional – in that it is deemed to have occurred but does not.

## Objective

Exercise objectives are specific statements describing what is to be achieved by individuals, groups or agencies participating in the exercise.

## Role players

Those who adopt the roles of casualties, affected persons or bystanders.

## Safety officer

A designated member of the EXCON staff that monitors all aspects of safety.

## Seminar

Informal discussions, unconstrained by real-time portrayal of events and led by a presenter. They are generally employed to orient participants to, or provide an overview of legislation, strategies, plans, policies, procedures, protocols, response resources, and/or concepts and ideas.

## Special idea

Special ideas (sometimes known as 'exercise serials', 'narratives' or 'inputs') are used to outline the developing exercise scenario. They provide the additional information or direction that participants require to react, as they would in real life.

## Syndicate progressive exercise

A type of discussion exercise where participants are divided into groups and a series of questions or problems, based on a developing/progressive scenario, are posed by a facilitator. The word progressive refers to the graduated development of complexity that will usually occur in an emergency situation and which may be replicated in the exercise via a series of special ideas.

Each step of questions or problems are discussed 'in syndicate' with a response being provided back to the larger group. During the discussion, exercise facilitators help the syndicate groups by answering questions and guiding them to ensure they stay on track and achieve the exercise objectives.

## Workshop

A type of discussion exercise that focuses on achieving or building a product (e.g. a draft plan or policy). Workshops can be employed as part of a graduated series of activities to determine solutions to exercise and/or operational problems.

A workshop may also be used to produce standard operating procedures (SOPs).

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# REFERENCES

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