Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP)

Volume I: HSEEP Overview and Exercise Program Management

February 2007

Homeland Security

Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program

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Preface

Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) Volume I was initially published in 2002 and provided an overview of the exercise design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning process as well as doctrine for U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) exercises. Subsequent volumes (II–IV) provided more detailed descriptions of the planning and evaluation process as well as sample exercise materials.

Since the initial versions of the HSEEP volumes were published, the homeland security community has experienced numerous changes, including the building of a new and cohesive Federal agency and the release and adoption of the National Response Plan (NRP), National Incident Management System (NIMS), National Preparedness Goal, Universal Task List (UTL), and Target Capabilities List (TCL). This 2007 release of the HSEEP volumes represents an exercise policy and program reflective of these changes.

The following changes have been made:

- The volumes have been made more user-friendly and concise.
- New policies have been incorporated (e.g., NIMS, NRP, National Preparedness Goal, UTL, TCL).
- References to DHS-specific doctrinal or grant-related requirements, such as the need for terrorism-related scenarios, have been eliminated.
- Comments from the Federal Interagency, as well as several State and local stakeholders, have been incorporated so the HSEEP Policy and Guidance is more applicable to all exercises, regardless of scope, scale, scenario, or sponsoring agency.
- The order of Volumes II and III has been reversed to follow the natural progression of exercise design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning.

It is important to note that the fundamentals of the exercise design, development, planning, evaluation, and improvement planning methodologies have not changed with these volume revisions.

Developing and implementing comprehensive exercise policies is a continually evolving process. As strategies, policies, and plans evolve, future revisions will be issued.

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Contents

Preface ..... ***i***
Introduction ..... ***v***
Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program ..... *v*
Purpose ..... *v*
Organization ..... *v*
Security Guidance ..... *vi*
Chapter 1: Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program Overview **1**
The Preparedness Cycle 2
Exercise Program Management 3
Exercise Project Management 3
The HSEEP Blended Approach 4
Chapter 2: Exercise Program Management **5**
Multi-Year Planning 5
Training and Exercise Plan Workshop 6
Corrective Action Program 6
Engaging Program Stakeholders 6
Identifying Exercise Stakeholders 7
Communicating with Exercise Stakeholders 7
Resource Management 7
Exercise Budget Management 7
Program Staffing 8
Non-Monetary Resources 8
Exercise Phases 8
Exercise Types 9
Discussion-Based Exercises 10
Seminars 10
Workshops 10
Tabletop Exercises 10
Games 11
Operations-Based Exercises 11
Drills 11
Functional Exercises 11
Full-Scale Exercises 12
Chapter 3: Exercise Project Management Overview **13**
Phase 1: Foundation 13
Exercise Planning Timelines 13
Exercise Planning Team 13
Exercise Planning Conferences 14
Phase 2: Design and Development 15
Capabilities, Tasks, and Objectives 16
Scenario 16
Documentation 16

Logistics 17
Phase 3: Exercise Conduct 17
Setup 17
Presentations/Briefings 18
Personnel 18
Phase 4: Evaluation 18
Hot Wash and Debrief 18
After Action Report / Improvement Plan 19
Phase 5: Improvement Planning 19
Improvement Plan 19
Improvement Tracking and Planning 19
Chapter 4: Capabilities-Based Exercises and Program Management 20
Capabilities-Based Exercise Program Management 20
Background 20
Capabilities-Based Planning Tools in Exercise Program Management 21
Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Capabilities-Based Exercises 22
Foundation 23
Design and Development 23
Conduct 24
Evaluation 24
Improvement Planning 26
Appendix A: Exercise Programs and Resources A-1
Appendix B: Glossary B-1
Appendix C: Exercise Planning Timelines C-1

Figures and Tables

Figure 2-1: *Improvement planning in the preparedness cycle* 6
Table 2-1: *Properties of the seven HSEEP exercise types* 9

Figure 3-1: *Depiction of an ICS-based exercise planning team* 14
Table 3-1: *Exercise Planning Conferences* 15

Table 4-1: *Notional multi-year training and exercise schedule* 21
Figure 4-1: *Referencing capabilities and tasks to create exercise objectives and scenarios* 24
Figure 4-2: *Improvement planning in the preparedness cycle* 25

Introduction

Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program

Following the domestic terrorist attacks in 1993, 1995, and 2001 and the establishment of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2002, officials at all levels of government and in all types of communities have worked to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from a variety of threats to public safety. Exercises play a crucial role in preparedness, providing opportunities for emergency responders and officials to practice and assess their collective capabilities.

Purpose

The purpose of the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) is to provide common exercise policy and program guidance that constitutes a national standard for exercises. HSEEP includes consistent terminology that can be used by all exercise planners, regardless of the nature and composition of their sponsoring agency or organization. The volumes also provide tools to help exercise managers plan, conduct, and evaluate exercises to improve overall preparedness.

HSEEP reflects lessons learned and best practices from existing exercise programs and can be adapted to the full spectrum of hazardous scenarios and incidents (e.g., natural disasters, terrorism, technological disasters). The HSEEP reference volumes integrate language and concepts from the National Response Plan (NRP), the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the National Preparedness Goal, the Universal Task List (UTL), the Target Capabilities List (TCL), existing exercise programs, and prevention and response protocols from all levels of government. In the spirit of NIMS, all efforts should be made to ensure consistent use of the terminology and processes described in HSEEP.

Organization

This document is the first of five HSEEP volumes, all of which are available at the HSEEP website (http://hseep.dhs.gov). The volumes are organized as follows:

> *HSEEP Volume I: HSEEP Overview and Exercise Program Management* provides guidance for building and maintaining an effective exercise program and summarizes the planning and evaluation process described in further detail in Volumes II through V.
>
> *HSEEP Volume II: Exercise Planning and Conduct* helps planners outline a standardized foundation, design, development, and conduct process adaptable to any type of exercise.
>
> *HSEEP Volume III: Exercise Evaluation and Improvement Planning* offers proven methodology for evaluating and documenting exercises and implementing an Improvement Plan (IP).
>
> *HSEEP Volume IV: Sample Exercise Documents and Formats* provides sample exercise materials referenced in HSEEP Volumes I, II, III, and V. Readers with Internet connectivity may click on exercise materials referenced in this volume to link to HSEEP Volume IV.
>
> *HSEEP Volume V: Prevention Exercises (Draft)* contains guidance consistent with the HSEEP model to assist entities in designing and evaluating exercises that validate pre-incident capabilities such as intelligence analysis and information sharing.

This volume, *HSEEP Volume I: HSEEP Overview and Exercise Program Management*, which provides an overview of HSEEP and guidance on exercise program management, is organized as follows:

Chapter 1: Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program Overview

HSEEP Volume I

Chapter 2: Exercise Program Management

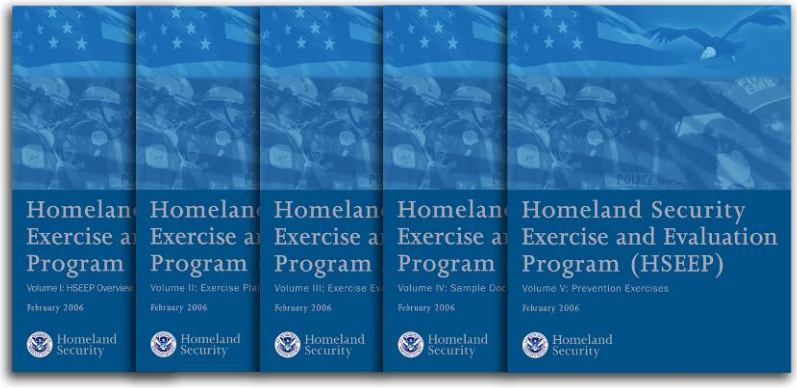
Chapter 3: Exercise Project Management Overview

Chapter 4: Capabilities-Based Exercises and Program Management

Appendix A: Exercise Programs and Resources

Appendix B: Glossary

Appendix C: Exercise Planning Timelines



Security Guidance

While most of the content found in HSEEP is not sensitive or classified, some HSEEP materials (e.g., scenario examples), particularly those in Volume IV, may necessitate restrictions on distribution. Exercise materials that are produced in accordance with HSEEP guidance and are deemed sensitive should be designated as *For Official Use Only* (FOUO). FOUO identifies unclassified information of a sensitive nature, not otherwise categorized by statute or regulations, of which the unauthorized disclosure could adversely impact a person's privacy or welfare, the conduct of Federal programs, or programs or operations essential to national interest. Examples of materials that may require FOUO designation include scenario information, the Master Scenario Events List (MSEL), and the After Action Report / Improvement Plan (AAR/IP). Access to FOUO information is on a need-to-know basis. FOUO information may be shared with other agencies; Federal, State, local, or tribal government; appropriate private sector representatives; and law enforcement officials, provided a specific need-to-know has been established and the information is shared in furtherance of a coordinated and official governmental activity.

Certain exercise-related information from private sector partners may require or be eligible for additional protections under the Protective Critical Infrastructure Information (PCII) Program. Established pursuant to the Critical Infrastructure Information (CII) Act of 2002, the PCII Program is an information-protection tool that enables members of the private sector to submit proprietary, confidential, or sensitive infrastructure information to DHS with the assurance that the information will be protected from public disclosure. Under the PCII Program, information that satisfies the requirements of the CII Act of 2002 is protected from public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), State and local disclosure laws, and use in civil litigation. DHS and other Federal, State, and local analysts use PCII in pursuit of a more secure homeland, focusing primarily on analyzing and securing critical infrastructure and protected systems, identifying vulnerabilities and developing risk assessments, and enhancing recovery preparedness measures.

Chapter 1: Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program Overview

> *Building on the existing NEP [National Exercise Program], DHS [U.S. Department of Homeland Security] should coordinate the establishment of a NEEP [National Exercise and Evaluation Program] for homeland security related exercises . . . The NEEP should designate HSEEP as the common exercise methodology across all levels of government, so all exercises are using the same doctrine.*
>
> — The Federal Response to Hurricane Katrina Lessons Learned, February 2006

Exercises allow personnel, from first responders to senior officials, to validate training and practice strategic and tactical prevention, protection, response, and recovery capabilities in a risk-reduced environment. Exercises are the primary tool for assessing preparedness and identifying areas for improvement, while demonstrating community resolve to prepare for major incidents. Exercises aim to help entities within the community gain objective assessments of their capabilities so that gaps, deficiencies, and vulnerabilities are addressed prior to a real incident.

Well-designed and well-executed exercises are the most effective means of:

- assessing and validating policies, plans, procedures, training, equipment, assumptions, and interagency agreements;
- clarifying roles and responsibilities;
- improving interagency coordination and communications;
- identifying gaps in resources;
- measuring performance; and
- identifying opportunities for improvement.

The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) is a capabilities- and performance-based[1] exercise program that provides a standardized policy, methodology, and terminology for exercise design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. HSEEP also provides tools and resources to facilitate the management of self-sustaining exercise programs.

In accordance with Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8 (HSPD-8) and the National Preparedness Goal, HSEEP uses a capabilities-based approach to individual exercises and exercise program management. In the spirit of the National Incident Management System (NIMS), HSEEP promulgates standardized policies and terminology usable by officials and emergency responders at all levels of government.

HSEEP has been accepted as the standardized policy and methodology for the execution of the National Exercise Program (NEP). The NEP is the Nation's overarching exercise program formulated by the National Security Council / Homeland Security Council (NSC/HSC), and executed by the Federal Interagency. All interagency partners have adopted HSEEP as the methodology for all exercises that will be conducted as part of the NEP.

[1] Capabilities- and performance-based exercises are further defined beginning on page 20.

The Preparedness Cycle

NIMS defines the *preparedness cycle* as "planning, training, equipping, exercising, evaluating, and taking action to correct and mitigate." Exercises play an important role in this broad preparedness cycle.

Exercises provide opportunities for Federal, State, local, and tribal leaders; department and agency officials; private sector partners; and emergency responders to practice and test capabilities that have been built up through a coordinated process of planning, training, and making equipment purchases. Plans, training, and equipment, and the capabilities they represent, are validated through exercises. Exercise evaluation informs preparedness priorities by highlighting potential preparedness shortfalls in the areas of planning, organization, training, and equipment prior to real-world incidents. Subsequently, these priorities inform resource allocation, including training and equipment purchases, which enhance readiness, influence policy or program decisions, and become the basis for future exercises.

The overarching framework provided by *HSPD-8: National Preparedness* guides preparedness cycle activities. Issued on December 17, 2003, HSPD-8 establishes policies to strengthen the preparedness of the United States to prevent and respond to threatened or actual domestic terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies by:

- requiring a National Preparedness Goal that establishes measurable priorities and targets;
- establishing mechanisms to improve delivery of Federal preparedness assistance to State, local, and tribal governments; and
- outlining actions to strengthen preparedness capabilities of Federal, State, local, and tribal governments and their private sector partners.

HSPD-8 complements and supports the earlier *HSPD-5: Incident Management*, which required the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to coordinate with other Federal departments and agencies—as well as State, local, and tribal governments and the private sector—to establish the National Response Plan (NRP) and NIMS. The NRP defines what needs to be done to manage a major incident, while NIMS defines how it needs to be done, using a standardized, consistent incident management system.

DHS—in coordination with the heads of other Federal departments and agencies and in consultation with State, local, and tribal governments, non-governmental organizations, and private sector entities—developed the all-hazards National Preparedness Goal. The vision for the National Preparedness Goal is to:

> *…engage Federal, State, local, and tribal entities; their private and non-governmental partners; and the general public to achieve and sustain risk-based target levels of capability to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from major incidents in order to minimize the impact on lives, property, and the economy.*

This goal is met by building and maintaining capabilities to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from major incidents, both natural and man-made. The ability of the homeland security community to achieve and sustain these capabilities requires engaging in *capabilities-based planning* by orienting the aforementioned preparedness cycle activities (planning, training, equipping, exercising, evaluating, and improvement planning) to achieve target levels of capability.

HSPD-8 further directs that DHS, in coordination with other appropriate Federal departments and agencies, establish a "national program and a multi-year planning system to conduct homeland security preparedness-related exercises that reinforces identified training standards, provides for evaluation of readiness, and supports the National Preparedness Goal." HSEEP provides the program structure, multi-year planning system, tools, and guidance necessary for entities to build and sustain exercise

programs that enhance homeland security capabilities and, ultimately, preparedness.

For more on HSEEP's role in the preparedness cycle, see *Chapter 4: Capabilities-Based Exercises and Program Management*.

Exercise Program Management

Exercise program management consists of the functions required for an entity (e.g., State, region, county, city, department, agency, private company, or other organization) to sustain a variety of exercises, targeted toward preparedness priorities, on an ongoing basis. It includes project management, multi-year planning, budgeting, grant management, staff hiring, funding allocation, and expenditure tracking.

The basis of effective exercise program management is a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan. A Training and Exercise Plan Workshop (T&EPW) is usually conducted in order to create a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan. During the workshop, participants review priority preparedness capabilities and coordinate exercise and training activities that can improve and validate those capabilities. As a result of the workshop, the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan outlines a multi-year schedule and milestones for execution of specific training and exercise activities.

Program management functions cyclically. First, a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan is developed in consideration of an entity's preparedness priorities. Next, specific exercise activities are planned and conducted according to the multi-year plan's schedule. Finally, exercise planners consider post-exercise After Action Reports / Improvement Plans (AARs/IPs) when developing priorities for the next multi-year plan, as well as updating plans and procedures, acquiring new equipment, and conducting additional training.

For more on exercise program management, see *Chapter 2: Exercise Program Management*.

Exercise Project Management

Exercise project management is a component of exercise program management used to carry out the activities needed to execute an individual exercise. Exercise project management involves five phases, which are collectively known as the *exercise cycle*. Exercises conducted in accordance with the phases of the exercise cycle lead to tangible preparedness improvements.

The five phases of the exercise cycle are as follows:

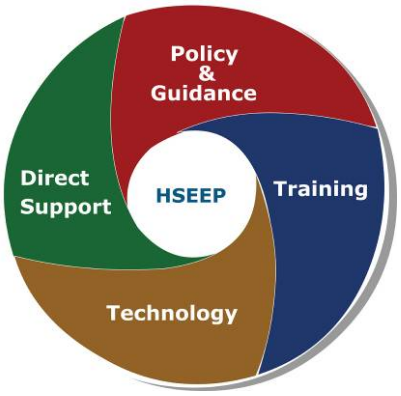
1. **Foundation:** The following activities must be accomplished to provide the foundation for an effective exercise: create a base of support (i.e., establish buy-in from the appropriate entities and/or senior officials); develop a project management timeline and establish milestones; identify an exercise planning team; and schedule planning conferences.
2. **Design and Development:** Building on the exercise foundation, the design and development process focuses on identifying objectives, designing the scenario, creating documentation, coordinating logistics, planning exercise conduct, and selecting an evaluation and improvement methodology.
3. **Conduct:** After the design and development steps are complete, the exercise takes place. Exercise conduct steps include setup, briefings, facilitation/control/evaluation, and wrap-up activities.
4. **Evaluation:** The evaluation phase for all exercises includes a formal exercise evaluation, an integrated analysis, and an AAR/IP that identifies strengths and areas for improvement in an entity's preparedness, as observed during the exercise. Recommendations related to areas for

improvement are identified to help develop corrective actions to be tracked throughout the improvement planning phase.

5. **Improvement Planning:** During improvement planning, the corrective actions identified in the evaluation phase are assigned, with due dates, to responsible parties; tracked to implementation; and then validated during subsequent exercises.

For more on exercise project management, see *Chapter 3: Exercise Project Management Overview*.

The HSEEP Blended Approach



In addition to providing a standardized policy, guidance, methodology, and language for exercise program and project management, HSEEP facilitates the creation of self-sustaining exercise programs by providing resources such as policy and guidance (i.e., HSEEP Volumes); training (i.e., HSEEP Mobile Course and online courses); technology (i.e., HSEEP Toolkit); and direct support (i.e., vendor assistance with planning and conducting exercises).

HSEEP policy and guidance for exercises is based on established best practices. By employing a blended approach that also includes training, technology, and direct support, HSEEP ensures that entities at all levels of government have the tools they need to successfully implement its policy and guidance.

Chapter 2: Exercise Program Management

This chapter describes important concepts and best practices in exercise program management. Detailed guidance and further descriptions of any exercise planning, conduct, and evaluation concepts addressed in this chapter are contained in *Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) Volume II: Exercise Planning and Conduct* and *HSEEP Volume III: Exercise Evaluation and Improvement Planning*.

Effective program management involves a collaborative approach that integrates the different resources of various agencies, organizations, and individuals from both the public and private sectors. Exercise program management is directed toward achieving the objectives established during the multi-year planning process, as described in an entity's Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan. In the context of multi-year planning, this chapter provides guidance on engaging program stakeholders, managing program resources, and assigning areas of responsibility for exercise program management.

Specific exercise program requirements for State, local, and tribal governments using U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) funds to support exercises can be found in the *Homeland Security Grant Program Guidance*.

Multi-Year Planning

As mentioned in Chapter 1, the foundational document guiding a successful exercise program is a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan. The Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan identifies an entity's priorities as articulated in the entity's strategy, and identifies the capabilities that are most relevant to achieving those priorities. It then outlines a multi-year schedule of training and exercises that an entity will undertake to enhance and validate its capabilities. It also graphically illustrates a multi-year schedule for training and exercise activities that support those priorities.

A multi-year plan employs a building-block approach in which training and exercise activities focus on specific capabilities in a cycle of escalating complexity. See Figure 2-1 for a depiction of the building-block approach. For more on how a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan can be aligned with other activities to support an entity's preparedness priorities, see *Chapter 4: Capabilities-Based Exercises and Program Management*.

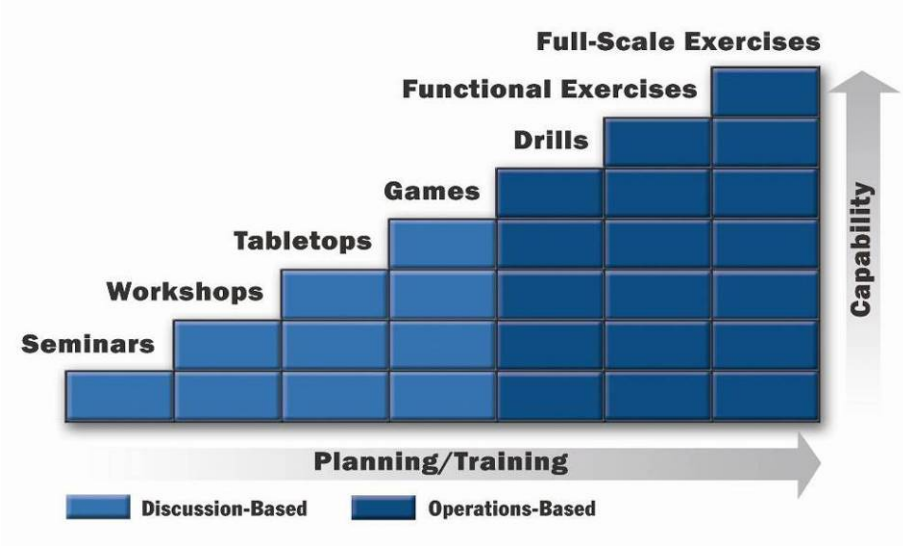


Figure 2-1: *Improvement planning in the preparedness cycle*

Training and Exercise Plan Workshop

An annual Training and Exercise Plan Workshop (T&EPW) provides an opportunity to develop, review, or update an entity's Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan. The T&EPW also provides a forum for determining how an entity will execute its multi-year plan in a given year. The purpose of the T&EPW and the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan is to translate strategic goals and priorities into specific training and exercise activities, and to coordinate and de-conflict all training and exercise activities on a schedule.

An effective exercise program uses a combination of exercise types to effectively accomplish exercise-specific objectives and program goals. Although each exercise type can be executed as a single activity, multi-year plans gradually build capabilities by employing a building-block approach of linked training and exercise activities that escalate in complexity, as illustrated in Figure 2-1. Because exercises are part of a broader preparedness cycle that also involves planning, equipment purchases, and training activities, multi-year plans should not schedule exercises without taking into consideration other issues—exercise scheduling should complement the full range of preparedness efforts and priorities being undertaken by a given entity.

T&EPWs include representatives from the entire spectrum of an exercise program's stakeholders, such as law enforcement, public health and medical community, and emergency management. Participants must be knowledgeable and have the authority to commit personnel and resources toward the activities scheduled in the multi-year plan.

Entities conducting exercises may receive funds from a number of different Federal, State, local, or private sector programs, and many of these programs have associated exercise requirements. Some programs, such as the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) and Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP) program are mandated by public law, various U.S. Army regulations, and/or Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) regulations affecting exercise conduct and reporting. Faced with various exercise requirements, organizations (e.g., law enforcement, health departments, Emergency Operations Centers [EOCs], citizen groups, transit agencies, power plants) with limited resources are encouraged to use T&EPWs to coordinate schedules at the State, regional, and local levels. A coordinated and integrated exercise program will eliminate duplicative efforts and therefore reduce the burden of conducting numerous exercises.

Expanded regional collaboration is identified in the National Preparedness Goal as a national priority. Exercise program managers should strive to include neighboring jurisdictions (e.g., counties, States, cities) in their T&EPWs in order to facilitate the execution of multi-function, multi-disciplinary exercises that involve cooperation among a region's various jurisdictions.

Corrective Action Program

After execution of an exercise, an evaluation team produces an After Action Report / Improvement Plan (AAR/IP), which defines specific corrective actions that must be taken to remedy issues observed during exercise evaluation. An AAR/IP assigns all corrective actions to a responsible person or organization, and includes incremental benchmarks and deadlines for completion. An exercise program manager should track progress on all resulting corrective actions identified in the AAR/IP, and should release periodic reports that document progress toward all corrective actions and highlight corrective actions that are incomplete or behind schedule. Such reports help communicate the concrete preparedness benefits generated by exercise activity, while also providing accountability for corrective action implementation.

Engaging Program Stakeholders

Broad participation from all stakeholders is important for ensuring that training and exercises meet a wide range of preparedness needs. Broad stakeholder participation also helps ensure that exercises will be more realistic, encompassing the full spectrum of response disciplines.

Identifying Exercise Stakeholders

Exercise program managers should identify as wide a range of stakeholders as possible, and seek to create a database cataloging stakeholder points of contact (POCs). This database lists each POC's contact information, areas of expertise, and prior exercise experience.

When identifying stakeholders, exercise program managers should consider individuals and organizations who would be involved in an actual incident or event, including:

- individuals with administrative responsibility relevant to exercise conduct (e.g., Federal, State, local, and tribal agency and private sector procurement officers);
- representatives from all first responder disciplines to be included in exercises;
- representatives from volunteer or non-governmental organizations, such as Citizen Corps Councils and the American Red Cross;
- representatives from important private sector entities; and
- Federal, State, local, tribal, private, and non-government officials who impact or are affected by exercise activities.

Once a comprehensive set of stakeholders has been identified, exercise program managers can help to integrate them into the exercise program by having them annually participate in the T&EPW, as previoulsy discussed. If program managers are attempting to build a new exercise program, they can begin by hosting an exercise working group involving representatives from all stakeholder entities. Stakeholders should be trained in HSEEP guidance and policy so that they can take advantage of the benefits of HSEEP's standardized methodology and terminology.

Communicating with Exercise Stakeholders

In order to engage stakeholders and secure their buy-in for exercise activities, exercise program managers should develop a stakeholder communications plan. This plan contains clearly defined communications objectives (e.g., to coordinate exercise efforts, to solicit feedback) and details timeframes and methods for regular communication. An entity's Federal and/or State reporting obligations can also be addressed as part of an effective communications plan.

Resource Management

An effective exercise program must efficiently utilize available financial, personnel, and non-monetary resources.

Exercise Budget Management

Effective budget management is essential to the success of an exercise program, and it is important for exercise managers to maintain awareness of their available resources and expected expenditures. Preliminary budgets should be developed in advance of funding allocations on the basis of worst-case scenarios, using previous-year budgets to help create estimates. Budgets should reflect an exercise program's priorities as captured in the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan, and should be maintained in order to meet reporting requirements of Federal and State agencies, as well as other grant providers. Program managers with budgetary responsibility should work with procurement officers, accountants,

auditors, and grant administrators to identify financial management requirements. At the very least, a program budget should track:

- POCs responsible for managing funds;
- amounts of funding awards;
- sources of funding awards;
- allowable funding expenditures;
- conditions or restrictions on expenditures; and
- expenditures and draw down against the funding source (i.e., procurement).

Exercise programs should define monitoring and reporting requirements that meet all relevant legal and grant-related standards.

Program Staffing

Staffing needs are determined largely by the activities mandated in the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan. Program managers identify the administrative and operational staff needed to implement the exercise program, including appropriate personnel to monitor grant expenditures. They assess their current staff availability, including full-time and detailed staff, part-time staff, and contractual support. Program managers also identify gaps between staffing availability and staffing needs, and communicate these gaps through the appropriate chain of command to program administrators to determine if funding is available for staffing. For cases in which direct funding cannot be procured, program managers should consider alternative means of procuring staff, such as using Federal and State grants, detailing stakeholder personnel, and adding volunteers or interns. Program managers must consider whether or not security clearances are required for program staff.

Non-Monetary Resources

Exercise program managers should identify non-monetary resources and promising practices that can support exercises. Such resources include equipment (e.g., smoke machines); exercise training courses (e.g., Emergency Management Institute [EMI]); guidance (e.g., HSEEP); materials from previous exercises; mutual aid agreements (MAAs); technical assistance; and information technology (e.g., HSEEP Toolkit). A number of organizations—such as the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), National Governors' Association (NGA), and Lessons Learned Information Sharing (LLIS.gov)—may be able to communicate promising practices that will facilitate exercise activities. When appropriate, information about these resources should be distributed to exercise stakeholders.

Exercise Phases

Multi-year planning, stakeholder engagement, and resource management are essential ongoing processes that provide the basis for the planning, conduct, and evaluation of individual exercises. The success of individual exercises relies on the execution of five distinct phases, which are collectively known as the exercise cycle: foundation, design and development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning.

Exercise foundation, design and development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning are all discussed in detail in *Chapter 3: Exercise Project Management Overview*. For the purpose of exercise program management, it is

important to assign clear roles and responsibilities for each of these phases, and establish mechanisms of monitoring and reporting to ensure that the steps are carried out in accordance with the priorities and schedule of the exercising entity's Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan.

Exercise Types

The HSEEP methodology is defined and implemented using seven exercise types, as shown in Table 2-1. The type of exercise that best meets an entity's requirements is identified through analysis of the capabilities the entity is attempting to validate; the training and exercises it has already conducted; and the resources available for exercise planning, conduct, and evaluation. A detailed exercise planning process has been defined for each type of exercise and can be found in HSEEP Volume II.

Utility/Purpose		Type of Player Action	Duration	Real-Time Play?	Scope
Discussion-Based Exercises	Familiarize players with current plans, policies, agreements, and procedures; develop new plans, policies, agreements, and procedures	Notional; player actions are imaginary or hypothetical	Rarely exceeding 8 hours	No	Varies
Seminar	Provide overview of new or current plans, resources, strategies, concepts or ideas	N/A	2-5 hours	No	Multi- or Single-agency
Workshop	Achieve specific goal or build product (e.g., exercise objectives, SOPs, policies, plans)	N/A	3-8 hours	No	Multi-agency/ Single function
Tabletop Exercise (TTX)	Validate plans and procedures by utilizing a hypothetical scenario to drive participant discussions	Notional	4-8 hours	No	Multi-agency/ Multiple functions
Game	Explore decision-making process and examine consequences of those decisions	Notional	2-5 hours	No (though some simulations provide real- or near-real-time play)	Multi-agency/ Multiple functions
Operations-Based Exercises	Validate plans, policies, agreements, and procedures; clarify roles and responsibilities; identify resource gaps	Actual; player action mimics reaction, response, mobilization, and commitment of personnel and resources	May be hours, days, or weeks, depending on purpose, type, and scope of the exercise	Yes	Varies
Drill	Validate a single operation or function of an agency	Actual	2-4 hours	Yes	Single agency/ Single function
Functional Exercise (FE)	Evaluate capabilities, functions, plans, and staffs of Incident Command, Unified Command, intelligence centers, or other multi-agency coordination centers (e.g., EOCs)	Command staff actions are actual; movement of other personnel, equipment, or adversaries is simulated	4-8 hours or several days or weeks	Yes	Multiple functional areas/ Multiple functions
Full-Scale Exercise (FSE)	Validate plans, policies, procedures, and cooperative agreements developed in previous exercises through their actual implementation and execution during a simulated scenario; includes actual mobilization of resources, conduct of operations, and integrated elements of functional exercise play (e.g., EOCs, command posts)	Actual	One full day or several days or weeks	Yes	Multi-agency/ Multiple functions

Table 2-1: *Properties of the seven HSEEP exercise types*

Exercise program managers should take advantage of the full range of exercise types, consistent with the building-block approach, when scheduling exercise activities in their entity's multi-year plan.

Discussion-Based Exercises

Discussion-based exercises are normally used as a starting point in the building-block approach of escalating exercise complexity. Discussion-based exercises include seminars, workshops, tabletop exercises (TTXs), and games. These types of exercises typically highlight existing plans, policies, interagency/inter-jurisdictional agreements, and procedures. Discussion-based exercises are valuable tools for familiarizing agencies and personnel with current or expected capabilities of an entity. Discussion-based exercises typically focus on strategic, policy-oriented issues. Facilitators and/or presenters usually lead the discussion, keeping participants on track toward meeting exercise objectives.

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, authorities, strategies, plans, policies, procedures, protocols, response resources, and/or concepts and ideas. Seminars provide a good starting point for entities that are developing or making major changes to their plans and procedures.

Workshops

After seminars, workshops represent the second tier of exercises in the HSEEP building-block approach. They differ from seminars in two important respects: participant interaction is increased, and the focus is on achieving or building a product (such as a draft plan or policy). Workshops are often employed in conjunction with exercise development to determine objectives, develop scenarios, and define evaluation criteria.

A workshop may also be used to produce new standard operating procedures (SOPs), emergency operations plans (EOPs), MAAs, multi-year plans, or improvement plans. To be effective, workshops must be highly focused on a specific issue, and the desired outcome or goal must be clearly defined.

Tabletop Exercises

TTXs involve key personnel discussing hypothetical scenarios in an informal setting. This type of exercise can be used to assess plans, policies, and procedures or to assess the systems needed to guide the prevention of, response to, and recovery from a defined incident. TTXs typically are aimed at facilitating understanding of concepts, identifying strengths and shortfalls, and achieving changes in the approach to a particular situation. Participants are encouraged to discuss issues in depth and develop decisions through slow-paced problem solving, rather than the rapid, spontaneous decision making that occurs under actual or simulated emergency conditions. The effectiveness of a TTX is derived from the energetic involvement of participants and their assessment of recommended revisions to current policies, procedures, and plans.

TTX methods are divided into two categories: basic and advanced. In a basic TTX, the situation established by the scenario materials remains constant. It describes an event or emergency incident (i.e., scenario) and brings discussion participants up to the simulated present time. Players apply their knowledge and skills to a list of problems presented by the leader/moderator; problems are discussed as a group; and the leader generally agrees on and summarizes the resolutions.

In an advanced TTX, play revolves around delivery of pre-scripted messages to players that alter the original scenario. The exercise controller (or moderator) usually introduces problems one at a time in the form of a written message, simulated telephone call, videotape, or other means. Participants discuss the issues raised by the simulated problem, applying appropriate plans and procedures.

TTXs are effective for evaluating group problem solving, personnel contingencies, group message interpretation, information sharing, interagency coordination, and achievement of specific objectives.

Games

A game is a simulation of operations that often involves two or more teams and uses rules, data, and procedures to depict an actual or assumed real-life situation. The goal of a game is to explore decision-making processes and the consequences of those decisions. A game does not require use of actual resources, and the sequence of events affects, and is in turn affected by, decisions made by players.

With the evolving complexity and sophistication of current simulations, opportunities to provide enhanced realism for game participants have increased. Computer-generated scenarios and simulations can provide a more realistic and time-sensitive method of introducing situations for analysis. Planner decisions can be input into realistic models to show the effects of decisions made during a game. Internet-based, multi-player games offer many additional benefits, such as saving money by reducing travel time, offering more frequent training opportunities, and taking less time away from primary functions. They also provide a collaborative environment that reflects realistic occurrences.

Operations-Based Exercises

Operations-based exercises represent the next level of the exercise cycle. They are used to validate the plans, policies, agreements, and procedures solidified in discussion-based exercises. Operations-based exercises include drills, functional exercises (FEs), and full-scale exercises (FSEs). They can clarify roles and responsibilities, identify gaps in resources needed to implement plans and procedures, and improve individual and team performance. Operations-based exercises are characterized by actual reaction to simulated intelligence; response to emergency conditions; mobilization of apparatus, resources, and/or networks; and commitment of personnel, usually over an extended period of time.

Drills

A drill is a coordinated, supervised activity usually employed to validate a single, specific operation or function in a single agency or organizational entity. Drills are commonly used to provide training on new equipment, develop or validate new policies or procedures, or practice and maintain current skills. Typical attributes of drills include:

- a narrow focus, measured against established standards;
- immediate feedback;
- a realistic environment; and
- performance in isolation.

Functional Exercises

An FE is designed to validate and evaluate individual capabilities, multiple functions, activities within a function, or interdependent groups of functions. Events are projected through an exercise scenario with event updates that drive activity at the management level. An FE simulates the reality of operations in a functional area by presenting complex and realistic problems that require rapid and effective responses by trained personnel in a highly stressful, time-constrained environment.

Response- and recovery-focused FEs generally concentrate on exercising the plans, policies, procedures, and staffs of the direction and control branches of Incident Command (IC), Unified Command (UC), and/or multi-agency coordination centers (e.g., EOCs). Movement of personnel and equipment is simulated.

Prevention-focused FEs usually concentrate on exercising the plans, policies, procedures, agreements, networks, and staffs of fusion centers or law enforcement agencies with counterterrorism missions. Adversary actions are largely simulated and delivered in the form of shared intelligence; however, some of these actions may be carried out by simulated adversaries, or Red Teams, in a separate but coordinated category of exercise play. See *HSEEP Volume V: Prevention Exercises* for more information on prevention-focused exercises.

Full-Scale Exercises

The FSE is the most complex type of exercise. FSEs are multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional, multi-organizational exercises that validate many facets of preparedness. They focus on implementing and analyzing the plans, policies, procedures, and cooperative agreements developed in discussion-based exercises and honed in previous, smaller, operations-based exercises. In FSEs, the reality of operations in multiple functional areas presents complex and realistic problems that require critical thinking, rapid problem solving, and effective responses by trained personnel. During FSEs, events are projected through a scripted exercise scenario with built-in flexibility to allow updates to drive activity. FSEs are conducted in real time, creating a stressful, time-constrained environment that closely mirrors real events. The level of support needed to conduct an FSE is greater than that needed during other types of exercises.

Response-focused FSEs include many first responders operating under the principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) to effectively and efficiently respond to an incident. Personnel and resources are mobilized and deployed to the scene where they conduct their activities as if a real incident had occurred (with minor exceptions). An FSE also may include functional play from participants not located at the exercise incident response site, such as multi-agency coordination centers (MACCs), EOCs, or hospitals.

Chapter 3: Exercise Project Management Overview

This chapter provides a brief overview of the process of planning, conducting, and evaluating exercises. Detailed guidance and further descriptions of many of the exercise concepts and materials addressed in this section are contained in *Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) Volume II: Exercise Planning and Conduct* and *HSEEP Volume III: Exercise Evaluation and Improvement Planning.* Examples of the referenced materials are contained in *HSEEP Volume IV: Sample Exercise Documents and Formats.*

Successfully conducting an exercise involves considerable coordination among participating agencies and officials. The HSEEP methodology divides individual exercises into five overarching phases: foundation, design and development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning.

Phase 1: Foundation

Establishing a foundation for a successful exercise involves the following steps: developing an exercise planning timeline with milestones, selecting participants for an exercise planning team, and scheduling planning conferences. Project management skills are essential during the foundation phase of the exercise process.

Exercise Planning Timelines

Exercise planning timelines establish target timeframes for attaining significant, exercise-related milestones, such as planning conferences, training, exercise conduct, after-action reporting, and improvement planning. These timelines should be consistent with the scheduling component of the entity's Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan.

Timelines will vary based on exercise scope and complexity. For example, exercise planners generally employ longer timelines for tabletop exercises (TTXs) than for workshops and seminars, and even longer timelines for complex or multi-jurisdictional full-scale exercises (FSEs). Timelines also may vary based on the entity's experience in conducting exercises, available resources, and exercise planning team size. Examples of exercise planning timelines containing milestones are available in *Appendix C: Exercise Planning Timelines* and in HSEEP Volume IV.

Exercise Planning Team

The exercise planning team is responsible for the successful execution of all aspects of an exercise, including exercise planning, conduct, and evaluation. The planning team determines exercise objectives; tailors the scenario to the entity's needs; and develops documents used in exercise simulation, control, and evaluation. While each exercise has its own planning team, personnel may carry over from one exercise to the next, and entities may find it advantageous to include team members with previous exercise planning experience.

The exercise planning team should seek to incorporate representatives from each major participating entity, but should be kept to a manageable size. The membership of an exercise planning team can be modified to fit the type or scope of an exercise. For example, an FSE may require more logistical coordination—and therefore more operational personnel on the planning team—than a discussion-based exercise.

An exercise planning team leader manages the exercise planning team. The team can most effectively be structured using Incident Command System (ICS) principles, as stated in the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The team's project management principles should reflect NIMS, with

clearly defined roles and responsibilities and a manageable span of control. Figure 3-1 depicts this type of exercise planning team organization.

Planning team members also help develop and distribute pre-exercise materials and conduct exercise briefings and training sessions. Due to this high level of involvement, planning team members are ideal selections for facilitator, controller, and/or evaluator positions during the exercise. However, the advanced scenario and events knowledge gained by exercise planning team members renders them ineligible to participate in the exercise as players. Planning team members are therefore asked to be "trusted agents" who should not release scenario-related information to players prior to an exercise.

Figure 3-1: *Depiction of an ICS-based exercise planning team*

Exercise Planning Conferences

Table 3-1 provides an overview of the types of planning conferences—in typical chronological order—that have been found to be the most useful in the next phase in the exercise cycle, exercise design and development. Exercise scope, type, and complexity determine the number of meetings necessary to successfully carry out the planning process. See *Appendix C: Exercise Planning Timelines* for more detailed guidance on exercise planning timelines.

Exercise Planning Conferences	Description	Exercise Type	Timing Prior to Exercise
Concept and Objectives (C&O) Meeting	▪ Identifies the type, scope, objectives, and purpose of the exercise ▪ Is typically attended by the sponsoring agency, lead exercise planner, and senior officials	Large-scale, high profile or series of exercises	Prior to, or concurrently with, IPC
Initial Planning Conference (IPC)	▪ Lays the foundation for exercise development ▪ Gathers input from exercise planning team on the scope, design, objectives, scenario, exercise location, schedule, duration, and other details required to develop exercise documentation ▪ Assigns responsibility to planning team members	All	Discussion-based: 3 months Operations-based: 6 months
Mid-Term Planning Conference (MPC)	▪ Resolves logistical and organizational issues that arise during planning such as staffing, scenario and time-line development, scheduling, logistics, administrative requirements, and draft documentation review ▪ May be held separately or in conjunction with a Master Scenario Events List (MSEL) Conference	Operations-based	3 months
Final Planning Conference (FPC)	▪ Uses a forum to review the process and procedures for exercise conduct, final drafts of exercise material, and logistical requirements ▪ Ensures there are no major changes made to the design or scope of the exercise or to any supporting documentation	All	Discussion-based: 6 weeks Operations-based: 6 weeks

Table 3-1: *Exercise Planning Conferences*

Phase 2: Design and Development

The design and development process builds on exercise foundation and focuses on identifying objectives, designing the scenario, creating documentation, coordinating logistics, planning exercise conduct, and selecting a focus for evaluation and improvement planning. Each of these elements is discussed in more

detail in HSEEP Volume II and HSEEP Volume III. Templates for all documents can be found in HSEEP Volume IV.

Capabilities, Tasks, and Objectives

Exercise capabilities, tasks, and objectives are the cornerstone of design and development. The exercise planning team must consider all of the capabilities being evaluated. Each capability has specific tasks associated with it that should be performed and validated during the exercise. These capabilities and tasks, derived from the Target Capabilities List (TCL) and Universal Task List (UTL), should be used to formulate exercise objectives that reflect the exercising entity's specific needs, environment, plans, and procedures. Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs), described in further under *Documentation*, contain these capabilities and critical tasks, which can be used to build objectives specific to the exercising entity.

Well-defined objectives provide a framework for scenario development, guide individual organizations' objective development, inform exercise evaluation criteria, and synchronize various agencies' efforts towards common goals to prevent duplication of effort and focus support on exercise priorities. The validation of capabilities is often accomplished by exercising and evaluating the agency plans or procedures that relate to the performance of the identified capabilities and tasks. HSEEP advocates the use of objectives that are simple, measurable, achievable, realistic, and task-oriented (SMART). Exercise planners should limit the number of exercise objectives to enable timely execution and to facilitate design of a realistic scenario.

Scenario

A scenario provides the storyline that drives an exercise. The first step in designing a scenario is determining the type of threat/hazard (e.g., chemical, explosive, cyber, natural disaster) to be used in an exercise. The hazards selected for an exercise should realistically stress the resources an entity is attempting to improve through its exercise program. The scenario should also be a realistic representation of potential threats and hazards faced by the exercising entity.

The next step in designing a scenario is to determine the venue (i.e., facility or site) in which exercise play will take place. Venue selection should reflect the hazard selected, allowing for realistic, exercise-based simulation of the hazard.

Documentation

The list below briefly describes the important document types associated with most exercises. The types of documentation described here are discussed in more detail in HSEEP Volume II.

- A **Situation Manual (SitMan)** is a participant handbook for discussion-based exercises, particularly TTXs. It provides background information on exercise scope, schedule, and objectives. It also presents the scenario narrative that will drive participant discussions during the exercise.
- An **Exercise Plan (ExPlan)**, typically used for operations-based exercises, provides an exercise synopsis and is published and distributed to players and observers prior to the start of the exercise. The ExPlan addresses exercise objectives and scope, and assigns roles and responsibilities that must be carried out for successful exercise execution. The ExPlan does not contain detailed scenario information, such as the hazard to be employed.
- A **Controller and Evaluator (C/E) Handbook** supplements the ExPlan, containing more detailed information about the exercise scenario and describing exercise controllers' and evaluators' roles and responsibilities. Because the C/E Handbook contains information on the scenario and exercise administration, it is distributed only to those individuals specifically

designated as controllers or evaluators.

- A **Master Scenario Events List (MSEL)** is a chronological timeline of expected actions and scripted events (i.e., injects) to be inserted into exercise play by controllers in order to generate or prompt player activity. It ensures necessary events happen so that all exercise objectives are met.
- A **Player Handout** is a 1–2 page document, usually handed out the morning of an operations-based exercise, that provides a quick reference for exercise players on safety procedures, logistical considerations, exercise schedule, and other essential information.
- **EEGs** help evaluators collect and interpret relevant exercise observations. EEGs provide evaluators with information on what tasks they should expect to see accomplished or discussed during an exercise, space to record observations, and questions to address after the exercise as a first step in the analysis process and development of the After Action Report / Improvement Plan (AAR/IP). In order to assist entities in exercise evaluation, standardized EEGs have been created that reflect capabilities-based planning tools, such as the TCL and UTL. EEGs are not report cards—rather, they are intended to guide an evaluator's observations so that the evaluator focuses on capabilities and tasks relevant to exercise objectives to support development of the AAR/IP.
- Exercise **policies** are implemented to prevent or, at a minimum, mitigate the impact of an action that may cause bodily harm to participants, destruction of property, or embarrassment to the entity conducting the exercise.

Logistics

Logistical details are important (but often overlooked) aspects of an exercise. They can make the difference between a smooth, seamless exercise and one that is confusing and ineffective. Discussion-based exercises require attention to logistical details, such as the availability of appropriately sized and comfortable meeting and briefing rooms, food and refreshments, audiovisual equipment, facilitation and note-taking supplies, badges and table tents, registration assistance, and direction signs. Operations-based exercises require badge/role identification, access to restrooms, food and water, on-site communications, arrangement of videotaping, props, site security, adherence to the weapons check policy, and observation of safety precautions.

Phase 3: Exercise Conduct

After design and development activities are complete, the exercise takes place. Prominent steps in exercise conduct include setup; briefings; management of facilitators, controllers, evaluators, players, and actors; and wrap-up activities.

Setup

The exercise planning team should visit the exercise site at least 1 day prior to the event to set up the site. On the day of the exercise, planning team members should arrive several hours before the scheduled start to handle any remaining logistical or administrative items pertaining to setup and to arrange for registration.

For a discussion-based exercise, room layout is particularly important. When setting up an operations-based exercise, planners must consider the assembly area, response route, response operations area, parking, registration, observer/media accommodations, and a possible Simulation Cell (SimCell) facility. Restrooms and water must be available to all participants, observers, and actors. All individuals permitted at the exercise site must wear some form of identification. Perimeter security and site safety during setup and conduct are essential.

Presentations/Briefings

Presentations and briefings are important tools for delivering necessary exercise-related information to participants. A discussion-based exercise generally includes a multimedia presentation to present the scenario and accompany the SitMan. An operations-based exercise may include briefings for controllers/evaluators, actors, players, and observers/media. Briefings and presentations are opportune times to distribute exercise documentation, provide necessary instructions and administrative information, and answer any outstanding questions.

Personnel

In both discussion-based and operations-based exercises, **facilitators** and **controllers** guide exercise play. During a discussion-based exercise, the facilitator is responsible for ensuring that participant discussions remain focused on the exercise objectives and making sure all issues and objectives are explored as thoroughly as possible within the available time. In an operations-based exercise, controllers plan and manage exercise play, set up and operate the exercise incident site, give key data to players, and may prompt or initiate certain player actions. All controllers are accountable to one senior controller.

Evaluators are selected from participating entities to evaluate and comment on designated functional areas of the exercise. Evaluators are chosen based on their expertise in the functional areas they evaluate. Evaluators have a passive role in the exercise and should only record the actions/decisions of players; they should not interfere with exercise flow. Evaluators use EEGs to record observations and notes.

Players have an active role in responding to an incident by either discussing (in a discussion-based exercise) or performing (in an operations-based exercise) their regular roles and responsibilities.

Actors are volunteers who simulate specific roles, such as disaster casualty victims, in order to add realism to an exercise.

Simulators, generally controllers, perform the roles of individuals, agencies, or organizations that are not actually participating in the exercise in order to drive realistic exercise play.

Phase 4: Evaluation

Evaluation is the cornerstone of exercises; it documents strengths and areas for improvement in an entity's preparedness. The analytical outputs of the evaluation phase feed improvement planning activities. Evaluation takes place using pre-developed EEGs, such as the standardized EEGs provided in HSEEP Volume III.

The evaluation process for all exercises includes a formal exercise evaluation, integrated analysis, and drafting of an AAR/IP.

Hot Wash and Debrief

Both hot washes (for exercise players) and debriefs (for facilitators, or controllers and evaluators) follow discussion- and operations-based exercises.

A hot wash is conducted in each functional area by that functional area's controller or evaluator immediately following an exercise, and it allows players the opportunity to provide immediate feedback. A hot wash enables controllers and evaluators to capture events while they remain fresh in players' minds in order to ascertain players' level of satisfaction with the exercise and identify any issues, concerns, or proposed improvements. The information gathered during a hot wash can be used during the AAR/IP

process, and exercise-specific suggestions can be used to improve future exercises. Hot washes also provide opportunities to distribute Participant Feedback Forms, which solicit suggestions and constructive criticism geared toward enhancing future exercises.

A debrief is a more formal forum for planners, facilitators, controllers, and evaluators to review and provide feedback on the exercise. It may be held immediately after or within a few days following the exercise. The exercise planning team leader facilitates discussion and allows each person an opportunity to provide an overview of the functional area observed. Discussions are recorded, and identified strengths and areas for improvement are analyzed for inclusion in the AAR/IP.

After Action Report / Improvement Plan

An AAR/IP is used to provide feedback to participating entities on their performance during the exercise. The AAR/IP summarizes exercise events and analyzes performance of the tasks identified as important during the planning process. It also evaluates achievement of the selected exercise objectives and demonstration of the overall capabilities being validated. The IP portion of the AAR/IP includes corrective actions for improvement, along with timelines for their implementation and assignment to responsible parties.

To prepare the AAR/IP, exercise evaluators analyze data collected from the hot wash, debrief, Participant Feedback Forms, EEGs, and other sources (e.g., plans, procedures) and compare actual results with the intended outcome. The level of detail in an AAR/IP is based on the exercise type and scope. AAR/IP conclusions are discussed and validated at an After Action Conference that occurs within several weeks after the exercise is conducted.

Phase 5: Improvement Planning

During improvement planning, corrective actions from the AAR/IP—such as additional training, planning, and/or equipment acquisition—are assigned, with due dates, to responsible parties. They are then tracked to completion, ensuring that exercises result in tangible benefits to preparedness.

Improvement Plan

The IP portion of an AAR/IP converts lessons learned from the exercise into concrete, measurable steps that result in improved response capabilities. It specifically details the actions that the participating entity will take to address each recommendation presented in the draft AAR/IP, who or what agency will be responsible for taking the action, and the timeline for completion.

Improvement Tracking and Planning

Once recommendations, corrective actions, responsibilities, and due dates are clearly identified in the IP, the exercising entity ensures that each corrective action is tracked to completion. Exercising entities review all exercise evaluation feedback and resulting IPs to assess progress on enhancing preparedness. This analysis and information is incorporated into the capabilities-based planning process because it may identify needs for additional equipment, training, exercises, coordination, plans, and/or procedures that can be validated through future exercises. Continual IP tracking and implementation should be part of a corrective action program within each participating entity. A corrective action program ensures IPs are living, breathing documents that are continually monitored and implemented, and that they are part of the larger cycle of improving preparedness.

Chapter 4: Capabilities-Based Exercises and Program Management

To meet the requirements of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8 (HSPD-8), the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) has adopted a capabilities-based approach to exercise program management, foundation, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. Capabilities-based planning is defined as planning, under uncertainty, to build capabilities suitable for a wide range of threats and hazards while working within an economic framework that necessitates prioritization and choice. Capabilities-based planning addresses uncertainty by analyzing a wide range of realistic scenarios to identify required capabilities, and is the basis for guidance such as the National Preparedness Goal, Target Capabilities List (TCL), and Universal Task List (UTL). Capabilities-based planning should be incorporated throughout the cycle of preparedness, to include plans, training, equipment, as well as exercises.

Capabilities-Based Exercise Program Management

Entities should use a wide range of scenarios to exercise their capabilities to prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from incidents involving varying threats, hazards, or sets of conditions. Capabilities-based planning provides the foundation for developing exercise program objectives, identifying sets of capabilities to exercise, and determining the conditions and scenarios that should be included and addressed in exercises. Rather than continually trying to predict the next threat or hazard that an entity may face, a capabilities-based approach to exercising allows exercise program managers and planners to focus on the capabilities (e.g., evacuation, mass care) that are inherent to a variety of scenarios (e.g., hurricanes, improvised nuclear devices).

Several tools are available to support the capabilities-based planning process and assist in aligning preparedness activities, including exercises, under the National Preparedness Goal. This chapter discusses these tools and provides guidance on how exercise program managers and planners can use capabilities-based planning to optimize their exercises.

Background

HSPD-8 required the creation of a National Preparedness Goal. On March 31, 2005, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) issued the Interim National Preparedness Goal. It enables the Nation to answer the following three fundamental questions:

- *How prepared do we need to be?*
- *How prepared are we?*
- *How do we prioritize efforts to close the gap?*

In order to answer the first question, DHS developed the TCL, which identifies the capabilities the Nation needs to prepare for, prevent, respond to, and recover from incidents of national significance, including terrorism or natural disasters. The TCL is designed to assist entities in understanding what their preparedness roles and responsibilities are during a major incident.

While the TCL describes the capabilities the Nation must build, the UTL, a companion document, describes the specific tasks that might be performed during an incident. The TCL also specifically enumerates *critical tasks*, which have been derived from the UTL and are defined as tasks that "must be performed during a major event to prevent (re)occurrence, reduce loss of life or serious injuries, or

mitigate significant property damage, or are essential to the success of a homeland security mission." The UTL describes what tasks need to be performed. Federal, State, local, and tribal entities and the private sector reserve the flexibility to determine who performs the tasks and how to perform them. No single entity is expected to perform all of the tasks; therefore, tasks are chosen based on entities' specific roles, missions, and functions. Entities at all levels of government use the UTL as a reference to help them plan, organize, equip, train, exercise, and evaluate personnel and organizations for the tasks they may need to perform before, during, and after major incidents. Both the UTL and TCL are considered "living" documents that will continue to be refined over time.

This chapter provides guidance on how to manage an exercise program in accordance with the principles of capabilities-based planning. It also provides examples of how capabilities-based planning can help the design, conduct, and evaluation of specific exercises. Many of these concepts are further defined or described in *Chapter 3: Exercise Program Management Overview*, and in HSEEP Volumes II and III.

Capabilities-Based Planning Tools in Exercise Program Management

The creation of capabilities-based exercise programs begins with a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan. The Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan identifies an entity's priorities as articulated in the entity's strategy, and identifies the capabilities that are most relevant to achieving those priorities. It then outlines a multi-year schedule of training and exercise activities that an entity will undertake to enhance and validate its capabilities (See Figure 4-1).

2005

Jurisdiction	Q1	Q2	Q3		Q4
Region 1	Training: NIMS	NIMS TTX	Training: Interoperable Communications	Joint Interoperable Comms TTX	Joint Interoperable Communications Full-Scale Exercise
Region 2	Training: Interoperable Communications	Interoperable Communications TTX	Training: Interoperable Communications		
Region 3	Training: NIMS	Training: Interoperable Communications	NRP TTX		

Exercises Training

Table 4-1: *Notional multi-year training and exercise schedule*

A Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan is developed in the context of a broader cycle of preparedness, which also includes equipment purchases; staffing decisions; and the development of plans, policies, and procedures. Training and exercise programs are most effective when the entire cycle of preparedness is aligned toward the development of specific capabilities.

For example, if a region conducted several exercises in a given year, and found that the most prominent recommendation from exercise After Action Reports / Improvement Plans (AARs/IPs) was to improve interoperable communications for responding agencies, then that region would focus its preparedness cycle activities on capabilities directly related to interoperable communications. It would begin by updating its communications standard operating procedures (SOPs) and purchasing new equipment to enhance interoperability. Next, the region would conduct a Training and Exercise Plan Workshop

(T&EPW), and from that workshop, develop a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan to target training and exercise activities toward strengthening and validating capabilities relevant to interoperable communications. The key steps in creating a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan are as follows:

1. **Identify preparedness priorities.** Such priorities are derived from National Preparedness Goal priorities, previous AAR/IPs, an entity's risk and vulnerability assessments, and/or existing capabilities that need to be validated.

   In the example, the region would identify interoperable communications as a priority by referencing previous AARs/IPs, as well as the National Preparedness Goal's National Preparedness Priorities, which include "Strengthen Interoperable Communications Capabilities."

2. **Identify capabilities relevant to priorities.** An entity selects capabilities for which to train and validate through the use of exercises. Entities use the TCL to identify capabilities relevant to their priorities, and they select a range of priorities for which they can realistically train and exercise.

   In the example, the region would select the TCL's Interoperable Communications Capability for improvement through training, then validate it through exercises.

3. **Schedule training and exercises that enhance and validate identified capabilities.** Entities employ a building-block approach, depicted in Figure 2-1, for training courses and exercises, with training and exercise activities gradually increasing in difficulty and complexity. Training courses are scheduled strategically to prepare responders for scheduled exercises.

   In the example, the region would begin its Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan schedule with training activities focusing on interoperable communications or multi-agency coordination, such as National Incident Management System (NIMS) training courses. Training would be followed by a series of exercises, of increasing complexity, focused on validating the plans, equipment, and training relevant to interoperable communications capabilities. The scenario employed for the exercises would be based on the region's threat/vulnerability analysis as well as a scenario best suited to validate the interoperable communications capability. The sequence for the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan could be to:

   - *begin with a seminar to review and discuss the revised communications SOPs;*
   - *continue with tabletop exercises (TTXs) in which representatives from various response disciplines discuss the communications challenges posed by a potential improvised explosive device (IED) incident, and validate their planned response procedures;*
   - *continue with multiple functional exercises (FEs) focused on interoperable communications among different jurisdictions and agencies at various stages of response to an IED incident; and*
   - *culminate in a full-scale exercise (FSE) that validates the effectiveness of existing communications plans and resources throughout all phases of IED response and recovery.*

For more information about the different types of exercises and/or the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan, see *Chapter 3: Exercise Program Management Overview*.

Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Capabilities-Based Exercises

Once a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan is developed, it is executed and implemented in accordance with the schedule. Successfully executing each exercise activity scheduled in an entity's

multi-year plan relies on completion of an exercise cycle consisting of the five phases described in Chapter 1 (foundation, design and development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning).

The requirements for each phase of the exercise cycle are described in detail in *Chapter 3: Exercise Project Management Overview*. The sections that follow discuss how to incorporate capabilities-based planning into each of the five phases.

Foundation

The foundation of individual exercises is a group of planning activities that ensures success. These planning activities consist of:

- establishing a base of support from the appropriate entities, and/or senior officials;
- forming an exercise planning team;
- scheduling planning conferences; and
- creating a detailed project management timeline.

These activities should be undertaken with an awareness of the targeted evaluation and improvement capabilities. For a detailed discussion of these foundational activities, see HSEEP Volume II.

Design and Development

The capabilities identified in an entity's Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan are the starting point for exercise design and development. Exercises are designed to measure and validate performance of these capabilities.

Creating exercise objectives that reflect an entity’s capabilities, and the critical tasks associated with those capabilities, is crucial to successful exercise design, development, and evaluation. The Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs), described in further detail below, are derived from the TCL and UTL to provide a baseline for exercise evaluation. Once capabilities, activities, and tasks are identified, exercise objectives can be designed based on the entity’s particular plans, policies, and procedures. Exercise objectives should be simple, measurable, achievable, realistic, and task-oriented (SMART).

In the example, for the Joint Interoperable Communications FSE, the region might select the following tasks from the Interoperable Communications EEG: implement response communications interoperability plans and protocols; establish an Incident Command Post (ICP) in a location that is safe and appropriate to facilitate communications; and designate a communications unit leader (COML), as appropriate, and announce to all relevant personnel who will carry out COML responsibilities. Based on these tasks, the region may design the following objective based on a participating jurisdiction’s SOPs and emergency operations plans (EOPs): Examine the ability of Jones County Emergency Medical Service (EMS) to communicate directly with the Jones County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) using the 800-megahertz (MHz) system.

Figure 4-1: *Referencing capabilities and tasks to create exercise objectives and scenarios*

The National Planning Scenarios, which were developed by a Federal Interagency working group and contain 15 scenarios illustrating a current range of threats and hazards the Nation faces, can provide a useful tool in exercise scenario design. However, while exercise planners may use the National Planning Scenarios as a reference or model for their exercise's scenario, *exercising entities are not expected to replicate the National Planning Scenarios in their exercises.* The National Planning Scenarios were used as a tool to derive the TCL and UTL. Now that the TCL and UTL exist, planners should develop scenarios capable of validating their capabilities, tasks, and objectives, while providing a vehicle for exercise play that realistically reflects the hazards and threats their jurisdictions or organizations face (i.e., risk/vulnerability analysis).

The design and development phase of the exercise cycle also includes creating documentation, performing logistical planning, and selecting EEGs that match the capabilities, tasks, and objectives that will be validated during the exercise.

Conduct

Exercise conduct validates the performance of objectives based on capabilities and tasks through effective execution of the scenario as well as pre-developed and ad-hoc injects. If used, injects are designed to stress the level of capability that already exists, without overwhelming participants.

Evaluation

Exercises should be performance-based and require demonstration, practical application, and evaluation of proficiency in the discrete, essential tasks that enable a mission to be successfully accomplished. Discussion-based exercises—seminars, workshops, TTXs, and games—provide forums for reviewing the adequacy of plans, policies, functions, and interagency/inter-jurisdictional agreements. During these exercises, evaluators observe discussions to assess the adequacy of and familiarity participants have with plans, resources, and relationships. Operations-based exercises—drills, FEs, and FSEs—are designed to validate personnel training and equipment performance in meeting critical tasks, capability outcomes, and missions. During these exercises, evaluators observe and assess actual performance in preventing or responding to a simulated disaster.

Exercises are evaluated against the relevant activities and tasks that are linked to each capability in the TCL. This can be done through the use of EEGs, which are mapped to the TCL and UTL.

Entities may prepare briefings to familiarize evaluators with personnel, resources, and technical issues pertaining to the performance of priority capabilities and associated critical tasks, while providing a clear framework for critical task performance evaluation. Evaluators are then strategically positioned to observe and record successes or shortcomings in performance of priority capabilities and critical tasks.

Exercises are immediately followed by a hot wash (for players) and/or debrief (for controllers, moderators, and evaluators), during which issues and observations arising from the exercise are discussed.

During these events, moderators or discussion leaders center discussions largely on the capabilities and critical tasks on which the exercise is focused. Issues and observations recorded during the exercise, as well as those recorded during post-exercise discussions, are captured in an AAR/IP. Once the AAR/IP is drafted, exercise planners may schedule an After Action Conference to specifically address AAR recommendations in the IP. Overall, the AAR/IP focuses on results in meeting TCL activities for priority capabilities and critical tasks.

Continuing with the example of the regional Joint Interoperable Communications FSE, an evaluator assigned to evaluate ICP operations might observe and record the following critical tasks being performed: implement response communications interoperability plans and protocols; establish an ICP in a location that is safe and appropriate to facilitate communications; and designate a COML, as appropriate, and announce to all relevant personnel who will carry out COML responsibilities. These observations, when coupled with those of other evaluators and information gathered during the hot wash and debrief, might then result in the determination that the region had fully demonstrated the Interoperable Communications capability that was the focus of the exercise.

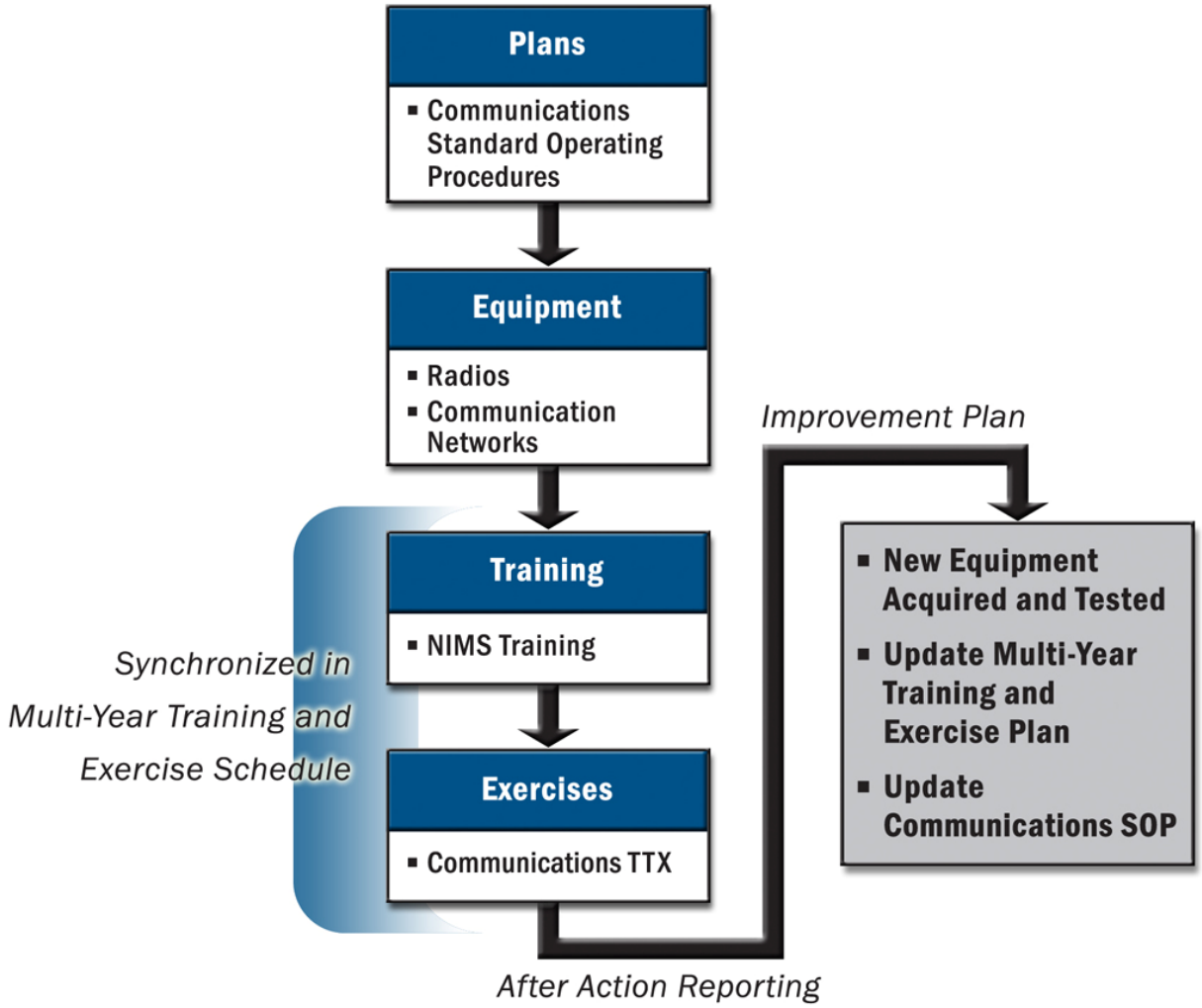


Figure 4-2: *Improvement planning in the preparedness cycle*

Improvement Planning

Once recommendations have been documented in the AAR/IP and discussed at the After Action Conference, it is necessary to identify corrective actions for improvement and to pursue their implementation by assigning responsibility and due dates. Once corrective actions are finalized, program managers prioritize, track, and analyze them as part of a continuous Corrective Action Program (CAP). The corrective actions identified in the previous year's exercise IPs should be reflected in the following year's Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan and schedule. Once completed, these corrective actions should be implemented and validated through subsequent exercises or real-world events through the CAP, which drives the exercise program management cycle. This concept is illustrated in Figure 4-3.

Following the regional example described earlier in this chapter, if a post-exercise evaluation concluded that the region's emergency response personnel needed to create standardized terminology for evacuation procedures, then the region's next Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan would address this issue by scheduling of drills or exercises designed to test whether or not a standard terminology had been introduced and successfully incorporated into SOPs and EOPs.

By tying all phases of an exercise—from foundation to improvement planning—to the TCL and other capabilities-based planning guidance, exercise managers can ensure that their exercise activities effectively practice, evaluate, and improve the preparedness capabilities that are identified as priorities at Federal, State, local, and tribal levels and within the private sector.

Appendix A: Exercise Programs and Resources

Department of Homeland Security

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) provides a range of assistance to assist entities with implementing effective exercises. Types of DHS assistance are described in this section.

Grant Funds

States receive an annual allocation of grant funds from DHS and may use a portion of the funds to enhance their State and local prevention and response capabilities through terrorism exercises. These grant funds, which must be used in accordance with the State Homeland Security Strategy, are described in more detail in the Homeland Security Grant Program application for the most recent fiscal year, available at http://www.dhs.gov. Grant funds can be combined with funds from other agencies to support a single exercise or set of exercises.

Exercise Training

Independent Study

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) Emergency Management Institute (EMI) is working to incorporate Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) guidance and methodology into a variety of its existing exercise training courses. Periodic EMI newsletters describe course content and availability. Additional information is available at http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb.

HSEEP Mobile Course

This scalable, modular course walks students through the full spectrum of exercise program management, foundation, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. It is intended for use by exercise program managers, planners, controllers, evaluators, and elected officials at the Federal, State, and local level.

The course is 3 days in length with a class size of approximately 50 students. Throughout the course, students are grouped into teams and complete 17 activities that apply the knowledge learned in the modules. It also covers new initiatives and updated policy including the HSEEP Toolkit, Target Capabilities List (TCL), and Universal Task List (UTL).

Master Exercise Practitioner Program

The EMI Master Exercise Practitioner Program (MEPP) is a performance-based curriculum focusing on the competencies required to plan, develop, design, conduct, and evaluate jurisdiction-specific exercises. The Resident MEPP consists of three resident courses and eight proficiency demonstration activities, and the Nonresident MEPP requires students to complete several independent study courses and several additional courses administered by the appropriate State Emergency Management Agency. A Nonresident MEPP candidate may complete the training and proficiency demonstration requirements by enrolling in the exercise practicum, a unique self-directed and self-negotiated series of 11 proficiency demonstrations. The MEPP candidate is challenged to apply the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired through participation in Comprehensive Exercise Curriculum courses to emergency management exercises. Additional information is available at http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb.

State-Provided Exercise Training

Many States offer exercise design, conduct, evaluation, and program management courses through State-run training centers or in conjunction with Federal agencies. For example, the California Office of Emergency Services' Readiness Program includes several exercise-related training courses for members of the California homeland security community. New Jersey and New York engage responders in and provide credit for participation in the FEMA Professional Development Series and Advanced Professional Series, each of which involve exercise design and management courses. Numerous States, such as Florida, provide regular HSEEP evaluation methodology training for exercise planners statewide.

Technical Assistance

DHS provides technical assistance (TA) to help jurisdictions and organizations resolve problems and/or create innovative approaches to preparedness. TA is available to conduct workshops; address the findings of After Action Reports / Improvement Plans (AARs/IPs); prepare entities to conduct prevention exercises; guide the use of capabilities-based planning tools; and assist with other program-focused activities.

Technology

HSEEP Website

All HSEEP reference manuals and materials are available through the HSEEP website (http://hseep.dhs.gov), which contains links to all of the HSEEP volumes, as well as other HSEEP-related initiatives (i.e., HSEEP Toolkit, HSEEP training, and other exercise resources)

HSEEP Toolkit

The HSEEP Toolkit is an interactive, online tool for exercise scheduling, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. The HSEEP Toolkit can be accessed from the HSEEP website, and includes the following sub-component systems:

- The National Exercise Schedule (NEXS) System is the Nation's online comprehensive tool that facilitates scheduling, de-confliction, and synchronization of all national-level, Federal, State, and local exercises.
- The Design and Development System (DDS) is a project management tool and comprehensive tutorial for the design, development, conduct, and evaluation of exercises. The DDS provides users with the appropriate templates and guidance for developing timelines, planning teams, and exercise documentation (e.g., Situation Manuals [SitMans], Exercise Plans [ExPlans]).
- The Corrective Action Program (CAP) System is a web-based application that enables Federal, State, and local officials to identify, prioritize, track, and analyze the recommendations and IPs developed from exercises and real-world incidents. Features of the CAP System include IP creation and maintenance, corrective action assignment and tracking, and reporting and analysis. The CAP System is the technological backbone for the improvement planning process described in *HSEEP Volume III: Exercise Evaluation and Improvement Planning*.

Lessons Learned Information Sharing

Exercises and the resultant AARs/IPs not only provide lessons for exercise participants, they also offer a valuable source of information that can be analyzed at the national level to identify lessons learned and best practices that can be shared to enhance preparedness nationwide. Lessons learned encompass knowledge and experience (positive and negative) derived from observations and historical study of actual operations, training, and exercises. Best practices encompass peer-validated techniques,

procedures, and solutions that work and are solidly grounded in actual operation, training, and exercise experience. Exercise AARs should identify lessons learned and highlight exemplary practices, and they may be submitted for inclusion in the Lessons Learned Information Sharing (LLIS) database, located at http://www.llis.gov, which serves as a national network for generating, validating, and disseminating lessons learned and best practices.

LLIS is designed to help emergency responders, homeland security officials, and healthcare professionals learn from each other and share information. LLIS offers access to a wide variety of original best practices and lessons learned, developed in consultation with frontline emergency responders and validated by emergency response and homeland security professionals. In addition to providing original best practices and lessons learned, the system also serves as a clearinghouse for preparedness documents, exercises, events, and news.

Direct Exercise Support

DHS has engaged multiple contractors with significant experience in designing, conducting, and evaluating exercises to provide support to State, local, and tribal entities in accordance with State Homeland Security Strategies and HSEEP. Contract support is available to help States develop a Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan and build or enhance the capacity of State, local, and tribal entities to design, develop, conduct, and evaluate effective exercises while simultaneously aligning the exercises with NEXS. Exercises conducted using direct support can help State, local, and tribal governments and their Federal interagency counterparts build self-sustaining exercise programs, demonstrate compliance with HSEEP, and provide best practices for future exercises.

Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program

The Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) is a partnership between DHS's Office of the Chemical and Nuclear Preparedness and Protection Division (CNPPD) and the U.S. Army that aims to assist communities surrounding the seven U.S. chemical stockpile sites to enhance their abilities to respond to a chemical agent emergency. CSEPP is a federally mandated program and is governed by Public Laws (P.L.) 99-145, 104-201, and 105-262; various Army Regulations; and memoranda of understanding (MOUs) between DHS/FEMA and the U.S. Army. The U.S. Army provides funding through DHS/CNPPD to the participating States and counties via negotiated Cooperative Agreements (CAs). CSEPP exercises focus on partnerships among Federal, State, tribal, and local entities involved in the program. The States administer CSEPP.

CSEPP communities have been recognized nationally for their abilities to respond to emergencies of all kinds. Many of the lessons learned in CSEPP are used in industry, and CSEPP enjoys partnerships with other public safety organizations to ensure that the knowledge gained has the greatest benefit for the most people. Specifically, CSEPP:

- conducts full-scale exercises (FSEs), functional exercises (FEs), drills, and tabletop exercises (TTXs) that improve readiness and employ peer evaluations;
- improves public warning and communication capabilities;
- builds and upgrades state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs);
- trains emergency managers and first responders;
- provides collective protection to special facilities to ensure the safety of vulnerable populations;
- studies emergency response options to determine the best way to protect communities;
- trains doctors, nurses, and other first responders how to treat victims of chemical agent exposure;

- uses the Integrated Process Team (IPT) at both the community level and national level to resolve issues and develop program guidance;
- conducts aggressive, community-based public outreach and training programs to train emergency planners and responders, residents of the communities, and special populations in all aspects of the chemical threat and potential protective actions; and
- develops and distributes a series of *Emergency Planners Companion* Internet and compact-disc (CD)-based courses; a series of digital video discs (DVDs) addressing *Shelter in Place*, *Evacuation*, and *Exposure and Contamination* to chemical and biological agents; and a medical curriculum addressing chemical, biological, and radiological threats.

Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program

The mission of the Radiological Emergency Preparedness (REP) program is to enhance planning, preparedness, and response for all types of peacetime radiological emergencies among all Federal, State, and local governments and the private sector, and to ensure that adequate offsite emergency plans and preparedness are in place and can be implemented by State and local governments. Emergency plans must protect the health and safety of the public living in the vicinity of commercial nuclear power plants and must be evaluated through biennial exercises.

Metropolitan Medical Response System

The primary focus of the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) program is to develop or enhance existing emergency preparedness systems to effectively respond to a public health crisis, especially a weapons of mass destruction (WMD) incident. Through preparation and coordination, local law enforcement, fire, hazardous materials (HazMat), Emergency Medical Service (EMS), hospital, public health, and other first-responder personnel plan how to more effectively respond in the first 48 hours of a public health crisis.

National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program

The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) National Preparedness for Response Exercise Program (PREP) establishes an exercise program that meets the intent of section 4202(a) of the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA 90), amending section 311(j) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (FWPCA).

As described in the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan (NCP) 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 300, PREP focuses on exercising and evaluating Government-area contingency plans and industry-spill response plans (for oil and hazardous substances). PREP is a coordinated effort of the following four Federal agencies with responsibility for oversight of private-sector oil and hazardous substance pollution response preparedness: USCG, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT's) Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), and the U.S. Department of the Interior's (DOI's) Minerals Management Service (MMS). These agencies worked with Federal, State, and local governments; the oil and marine transportation industry; cleanup contractors; and the general public to develop the program.

PREP meets the OPA mandate for exercises and represents minimum guidelines for ensuring overall preparedness within the response community. It also recognizes the economic and operational constraints faced by those affected by the exercise requirements. The guidelines, which are reviewed periodically through a public workshop process, outline an exercise program that satisfies the exercise requirements of the four Federal regulatory agencies.

PREP requires each industry response plan holder and Government area contingency plan holder to engage in a series of exercises aimed at assessing the entire plan over the course of a three-year cycle.

Most of these exercises are conducted wholly within the plan holder's organization each year and include the following:

- Quarterly notification exercise to assess internal communications and coordination
- Quarterly emergency procedures exercise to assess initial actions of facility or vessel personnel in the event of a spill emergency
- Equipment deployment exercise to assess capability of response personnel and equipment in executing response strategies contained in the plan (conducted semi-annually if owned, annually if contracted)
- An annual spill management team exercise to assess plan holders' spill response management organization and its ability to implement and manage response plan strategies and resources
- An unannounced exercise using one or more of the above exercise types to assess ongoing readiness to respond quickly in an emergency (conducted at least annually)

Government and industry plan holders also interact in external exercises. For example, once every three years, each USCG and EPA contingency planning area holds an area exercise involving major joint government and industry plan holders to assess cooperation, compatibility, and adequacy of strategies. It must include both the spill management team and equipment deployment exercises.

Spill of National Significance Exercise Program

A Spill of National Significance (SONS) is a rare, catastrophic oil or hazardous substance spill that captures national attention and requires the coordinated response of multiple Federal and State agencies over an extended period of time.

The USCG SONS Exercise Program increases awareness of USCG response protocols in place for responding to a catastrophic spill. The exercise allows senior administration officials at both the regional and national levels to practice emergency interaction with Congress, the States, and industry in a non-emergency environment. The program's major objectives are as follows:

- Increase national preparedness for a SONS scenario by engaging all levels of spill management in a coordinated response
- Improve, through practice, the ability of the national incident commander (NIC) organization to manage a SONS incident
- Maintain awareness of agency heads and lawmakers in Washington, D.C., regarding their role during a SONS response

A SONS exercise typically consists of field, regional, and headquarters personnel and resources all connected by a common scenario. The field-level exercise is an FSE that tests the area contingency plan for one or more port areas. The NIC-level exercise tests a regional contingency plan and internal USCG policy directives and their ability (as they relate to the NIC) to effectively manage a SONS; it also supports the field and headquarters components. The headquarters-level exercise brings together senior agency officials and industry representatives to discuss interagency issues and responsibilities. It tests the national contingency plan and appropriate USCG policy as they relate to a SONS response.

SONS exercises are conducted approximately every 2-to-3 years, alternating among East Coast, Gulf Coast, West Coast, and Great Lakes scenarios.

Department of Health and Human Services

Strategic National Stockpile Exercises

An act of terrorism (or a large-scale natural disaster) targeting the U.S. civilian population will require rapid access to large quantities of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies; such quantities may not be readily available unless special stockpiles are created. No one can anticipate exactly where a terrorist will strike, and few State or local governments have the resources to create sufficient stockpiles on their own. Therefore, a national stockpile has been created as a resource for all.

In the Homeland Security Act of 2002, DHS defines the goals and performance requirements of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS)—formerly the National Pharmaceutical Stockpile (NPS)—program, and DHS also manages the deployment of its assets. In 2004, management of the program was returned to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). HHS works with DHS and other governmental and nongovernmental partners to upgrade the Nation's response capacity. Ensuring capacity is developed at the Federal, State, and local levels to receive, stage, and dispense SNS assets is critical to the success of this initiative.

The SNS program is committed to participating in one external exercise—defined as an exercise that involves deployment of personnel and material—each month. The SNS Exercise Life Cycle is comprised of the receipt, processing, and approval of requests for exercise participation. The SNS Exercise Life Cycle spans more than 10 months—9 months prior to the exercise and 1 month after the date of the exercise. Requests for SNS exercise support to exercising States or local jurisdictions should be submitted a minimum of 9 months prior to an exercise; SNS exercise support is in high demand and may exceed the program's current capability. The SNS program also needs recovery time to refit specialized cargo containers and prepare them for shipment to the next exercise. The program prioritizes requests based on the order of receipt; the educational value of the request; previous opportunities provided to the requesting agency; resource requirements; and the exercise's proposed goals, objectives, and plans. Only the office of the director has the authority to commit SNS program participation in an exercise.

Appendix B: Glossary

Term	Acronym	Definition
Actor		Actors are typically volunteer personnel responsible for simulating a specific role in an exercise. Actors are vital to creating a realistic scenario and can play a variety of roles. For example, actors can simulate victims of a disaster, be civilians receiving prophylaxis, or friends and family of victims.
Actor Briefing		An actor briefing is generally conducted the morning of the exercise and provides *actors* with an overview of the exercise (e.g., schedule, safety information, actual emergency instructions, role and responsibilities, and acting instructions). Identification badges and/or *symptomology cards* should be distributed before or during this briefing. If *moulage* is to be applied to actors, it should be completed before the briefing. Actor instructions or identification tags tell volunteers about any special considerations about the exercise.
After Action Conference		As soon as possible after completion of the draft *After Action Report (AAR)*, the *lead evaluator*, members of the *evaluation team*, and other members of the *exercise planning team* should conduct an After Action Conference to present, discuss, and refine the draft AAR, and to develop an Improvement Plan (IP). This conference is a chance to present the AAR to *participating* entities in order to solicit feedback and make necessary changes. A list of corrective actions should be generated identifying what will be done to address the *recommendations*, who (what agency or person) is responsible, and the timeframe for implementation.

Term	Acronym	Definition
After Action Report / Improvement Plan	AAR/IP	The main product of the evaluation and improvement planning process is the AAR/IP. The AAR/IP has two components: an AAR, which captures observations of an exercise and makes *recommendations* for post-exercise improvements; and an IP, which identifies specific corrective actions, assigns them to responsible parties, and establishes targets for their completion. The *lead evaluator* and the *exercise planning team* draft the AAR and submit it to conference participants prior to the After Action Conference. The draft AAR is completed first and distributed to conference participants for review no more than 30 days after exercise conduct. The final AAR/IP is an outcome of the After Action Conference and should be disseminated to participants no more than 60 days after exercise conduct. Even though the AAR and IP are developed through different processes and perform distinct functions, the final AAR and IP should always be printed and distributed jointly as a single AAR/IP following an exercise.
Agent Fact Sheet		The Agent/Source Fact Sheet contains specific information regarding the *scenario* agent or radiological source (e.g., anthrax, smallpox, cesium) used in an exercise. Fact sheets might include properties, symptoms, effects, lethality, transmissibility, decontamination, or prophylaxis methods. (Note: In a radiological scenario, it is not an agent, it is a “source.”)

Term	Acronym	Definition
Analysis		**Exercise Data Analysis** is consolidated and transformed into narratives that address the course of exercise play, demonstrated strengths, areas for improvement, and performance ratings appropriate for inclusion in the AAR/IP. Because *operations-based* exercises yield greater amounts of data, operations-based exercises require more thorough and involved data analysis than do *discussion-based* exercises. **Capability-Level Analysis** assesses if the *participants*, as a whole, achieved the expected *capability* outcomes. **Integrated Timeline Analysis** is the reconstruction of the activities that occurred during the exercise. *Participants* use the timeline to identify discrepancies between what happened and what was supposed to happen and to develop *recommendations* to address those gaps. **Root-Cause Analysis** of the integrated timeline focuses on identifying the most basic causal factor for why an expected action did not occur or was not performed as expected. **Task-Level Analysis** examines the ability of individual players or functional areas to perform a required task during an exercise. Task-level analysis can help identify the shortcomings or errors preventing demonstration of a *capability*. Task-level analysis is useful for entities to analyze shortcomings and target planning, equipment, and training resources optimally to improve their capabilities. **Task-Level Performance Analysis** describes the ability of individual players or teams to perform a required task during an exercise. It answers the question, “Did the individuals or team carry out the task in the way that you expected and in a way that achieved the function goal?” **Mission-Level Performance Analysis** assesses the ability of the intergovernmental community as a whole (i.e., across disciplines and jurisdictions) to achieve the expected outcomes in responding to an incident. It answers the question, “How prepared is the community to prevent or respond to and recover from a terrorist attack or natural disaster?”
Analytical Red Teaming		In *prevention* exercises, analytical red teaming is a *discussion-based* technique used to employ an adversary’s perspective to advance security by providing an alternative view of threats, vulnerabilities, and countermeasures.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Assembly Area		The assembly area is the gathering place for deployable resources (e.g., fire engines, police cars) before the start of an *operations-based* exercise. The assembly area simulates each department or agency's home station or office. The assembly area provides a safer and more controlled environment than deploying apparatus from each agency's home station. In order to realistically simulate the response from the agency's home station or office, response times should be collected for each unit, so units can be appropriately released from the assembly area after they have been dispatched. The assembly area should *not* be confused with the staging area established by Incident Command during exercise play.
Assembly Area Controller		The assembly area controller is responsible for the logistical organization of the *assembly area,* including placement locations for units and coordination of exiting patterns for dispatched units.
Attack Tree		The attack tree is a tool used during *prevention* exercises that provides the *exercise planning team* with a visual representation of the anticipated and potential paths an adversary can take to execute an attack. It is useful for both planning and evaluating exercises.
Base of Support		Base of support is a concept of support or "buy-in" from the appropriate senior officials and/or private sector executive-level for the conduct of an exercise or execution of an exercise program. Establishing this base of support indicates that an exercise's *purpose* and *objectives* are concurrent with strategic and organizational goals and objectives.
Best Practices		Best practices are peer-validated techniques, procedures, and solutions that prove successful and are solidly grounded in actual experience in operations, training, and exercises. AAR/IPs should identify *lessons learned* and highlight *best practices*. Many of these can be found on www.llis.gov, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's (DHS's) lessons learned / best practices portal.
Blue Team		In *prevention* exercises, the Blue Team consists of briefed players and other organizations and agencies participating in a prevention-focused exercise that are not part of the *Red Team*. [See also *friendly force*.]

Term	Acronym	Definition
Building-Block Approach		The building-block approach focuses on exposing participants to a cycle of training and exercises that escalates in complexity, with each exercise designed to build upon the last, in terms of scale and subject matter. For example, a building-block series of exercises may include a *seminar*, which leads to a *tabletop exercise (TTX)*, which leads to a *full-scale exercise (FSE)*.
Capabilities-Based Planning		Capabilities-based planning is defined as planning, under uncertainty, to build capabilities suitable for a wide range of threats and hazards while working within an economic framework that necessitates prioritization and choice. It addresses uncertainty by analyzing a wide range of realistic *scenarios* to identify required *capabilities*, and it is the basis for guidance such as the *National Preparedness Goal*, *Target Capabilities List (TCL)*, and *Universal Task List (UTL)*.
Capability		A capability may be delivered with any combination of properly planned, organized, equipped, trained, and exercised personnel who achieve the intended outcome. Descriptions of these combinations can be found in the *TCL* for each capability. This combination of resources provides the means to accomplish one or more *tasks* under specific conditions and meet specific performance standards.
Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program	CSEPP	CSEPP was developed to safeguard against increased hazards associated with critical infrastructure and hazardous materials. It contributed to the development of the *Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP)* evaluation methodology.
Concept and Objectives Meeting	C&O Meeting	The C&O Meeting is the formal beginning of the exercise planning process. It is held to ensure that exercise planners agree upon the already-identified type, *scope*, *capabilities*, *objectives*, and *purpose* of the exercise. For less complex exercises and for entities with limited resources, the C&O Meeting can be conducted in conjunction with the *Initial Planning Conference (IPC)*; however, when exercise scope dictates, the C&O Meeting is held first. Representatives from the sponsoring agency or organization, the *exercise planning team leader*, and senior officials typically attend the C&O Meeting to identify an overall exercise goal, develop rough drafts of exercise capabilities and objectives, and identify *exercise planning team* members.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Control Staff Instructions	COSIN	The COSIN, typically only used in larger, more complex exercises (e.g., *TOPOFF*) contains guidance that *controllers* may need concerning procedures and responsibilities for exercise control, simulation, and support. The COSIN is designed to help exercise controllers understand their roles and responsibilities in exercise execution in order to conduct an effective exercise. For most exercises, however, the COSIN can be combined with an *Evaluation Plan (Evalplan)* to produce a *Controller and Evaluator (C/E) Handbook*.
Controller and Evaluator Briefing	C/E briefing	The C/E briefing is a pre-exercise overview for *controllers*, *evaluators*, and exercise administrative staff. The briefing summarizes the *C/E Handbook* (or the *COSIN* and *EvalPlan*) and focuses on explaining the roles and responsibilities of controllers and evaluators. This is the time to address any changes in the exercise and answer final questions. It is generally 1–2 hours in length and is conducted the day before an *operations-based* exercise.
Controller and Evaluator Debrief	C/E debrief	The C/E debriefing provides each *controller* and *evaluator* with an opportunity to provide an overview of the functional area they observed, and to discuss strengths and areas for improvement. The *lead evaluator* should assign one or more members of the *evaluation team* to take detailed notes of the C/E debriefing discussion.
Controller and Evaluator Handbook	C/E Handbook	The C/E Handbook is an exercise overview and instructional manual for *controllers* and *evaluators*. A supplement to the *Exercise Plan* (*ExPlan*), it contains more detailed information about the *scenario*, and describes controllers' and evaluators' roles and responsibilities. Because the C/E Handbook contains information on the scenario and exercise administration, it should be distributed only to those individuals specifically designated as controllers or evaluators. Larger, more complex exercises may use a separate *COSIN* and *EvalPlan* in place of the C/E Handbook.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Controllers		In an *operations-based exercise*, *controllers* plan and manage exercise play, set up and operate the exercise incident site, and possibly take the roles of individuals and agencies not actually participating in the exercise (i.e., in the *Simulation Cell* [*SimCell*]). Controllers direct the pace of exercise play and routinely include members from the *exercise planning team*, provide key data to players, and may prompt or initiate certain player actions and injects to the players as described in the *Master Scenario Event List (MSEL)* to ensure exercise continuity. The individual *controllers* issue exercise materials to *players* as required, monitor the exercise timeline, and monitor the safety of all exercise *participants*. Controllers are the only participants who should provide information or direction to players. All controllers should be accountable to one senior controller. (Note: If conducting an exercise requires more controllers or evaluators than are available, a controller may serve as an *evaluator*; however, this typically is discouraged.)
Corrective Action		Corrective actions are the concrete, actionable steps outlined in IPs that are intended to resolve preparedness gaps and shortcomings experienced in exercises or real-world events.
Corrective Action Program	CAP	A CAP is an element of improvement planning through which corrective actions from the AAR/IP are prioritized, tracked, and analyzed continuously until they have been fully implemented and validated.
Critical Path		This exercise planning and evaluation tool is the map of both the expected and actual *Blue Team* and *Red Team* moves and countermoves throughout the course of a *prevention* exercise.
Critical Task		Critical tasks are defined as those *prevention*, *protection*, *response*, and *recovery tasks* that require coordination among an appropriate combination of Federal, State, local, tribal, private sector, and non-governmental entities during a major incident in order to minimize the impact on lives, property, and the economy. Participants must perfrom critical tasks in order to prevent occurrence of a major incident; respond and reduce loss of life or serious injuries; or mitigate significant property damage, all of which are essential to the success of a homeland security mission.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Debrief		A debriefing is a forum for planners, *facilitators*, *controllers*, and *evaluators* to review and provide feedback after the exercise is held. It should be a facilitated discussion that allows each person an opportunity to provide an overview of the functional area they observed and document strengths and areas for improvement. The *exercise planning team* leader or the *exercise program manager* facilitate debriefs, and results are captured for inclusion in the *AAR/IP*. (Note: Other sessions, such as a separate debrief for hospitals during an *operations-based* exercise, may be held as necessary.) A debriefing is different from a *hot wash*, in that a hot wash is intended for players to provide feedback.
Design and Development		Building on the exercise *foundation*, the design and development process should consist of identifying *capabilities*, *tasks*, and *objectives*; designing the *scenario*; creating documentation; coordinating logistics; planning exercise conduct; and selecting an evaluation and improvement methodology.
Discussion-Based Exercise		Discussion-based exercises are normally used as a starting point in the *building-block approach* to the cycle, mix, and range of exercises. Discussion-based exercises include *seminars*, *workshops*, *TTXs*, and *games*. These types of exercises typically highlight existing plans, policies, mutual aid agreements (MAAs), and procedures, and are exceptional tools to familiarize agencies and personnel with an entity's current or expected *capabilities*. Discussion-based exercises typically focus on strategic, policy-oriented issues, whereas *operations-based* exercises tend to focus more on tactical, response-related issues. *Facilitators* and/or presenters usually lead the discussion and keep *participants* on track to meet exercise *objectives*.
Drill		A drill, a type of *operations-based* exercise, is a coordinated, supervised activity usually employed to test a single specific operation or function in a single agency. Drills are commonly used to provide training on new equipment, develop or test new policies or procedures, or practice and maintain current skills.
Evaluation		One of the five phases of the exercise process, evaluation is the cornerstone of exercises; it documents strengths and opportunities for improvement in an entity's preparedness and is the first step in the improvement process. Under the *HSEEP*, evaluations are conducted through *player* observation and the use of *Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs)*, which outline exercise performance measures expected from *players*.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Evaluation Plan	EvalPlan	The EvalPlan is typically used for *operations-based* exercises of a large *scope* and scale; this document provides specific guidance to exercise *evaluators*. The EvalPlan is designed to help exercise evaluators understand their roles and responsibilities in exercise data collection and evaluation in order to conduct an effective *analysis* of the exercise and produce a comprehensive *AAR/IP*. For most exercises, however, the EvalPlan can be combined with a *COSIN* to produce a *C/E Handbook*.
Evaluation Team		The evaluation team consists of evaluators trained to observe and record *player* actions. These individuals should be familiar with the exercising entity's plans, policies, procedures, and agreements.
Evaluator		Evaluators, selected from participating agencies, are chosen based on their expertise in the functional areas they will observe. Evaluators use *EEGs* to measure and assess performance, capture unresolved issues, and *analyze* exercise results. Evaluators passively assess and document players' performance against established emergency plans and exercise evaluation criteria, in accordance with *HSEEP* standards. Evaluators have a passive role in the exercise and only note the actions/decisions of players without interfering with exercise flow.
Event		Within the *MSEL*, an event is an expected action that is expected to take place during an exercise.
Exercise		An exercise is an instrument to train for, assess, practice, and improve performance in *prevention*, *protection*, *response*, and *recovery capabilities* in a risk-free environment. Exercises can be used for: testing and validating policies, plans, procedures, training, equipment, and inter-agency agreements; clarifying and training personnel in roles and responsibilities; improving interagency coordination and communications; identifying gaps in resources; improving individual performance; and identifying opportunities for improvement. (Note: An exercise is also an excellent way to demonstrate community resolve to prepare for disastrous events).

Term	Acronym	Definition
Exercise Director		The exercise director oversees all exercise functions during exercise conduct; oversees and remains in contact with *controllers* and *evaluators*; *debriefs* controllers and evaluators following the exercise; and oversees setup and cleanup of the exercise as well as positioning of controllers and evaluators.
Exercise Evaluation Guide	EEG	EEGs are *HSEEP* documents that support the exercise *evaluation* process by providing evaluators with consistent standards for observation, *analysis*, and *AAR/IP* development. Each EEG is linked to a *target capability* and provides standard activities, performance measures, and tasks to be evaluated based on the exercise *objectives*. Additionally, an EEG contains a Capability Narrative section, in which evaluators provide a general chronological narrative of exercise events associated with the capability; and an Evaluator Observations section in which *evaluators* provide specific strengths and areas of improvement linked to the capability. The consistent guidelines provided in EEGs facilitate creation of AAR/IPs resulting in actionable IPs that target specific personnel, planning, organization, equipment, and training needs within capabilities.
Exercise Plan	ExPlan	ExPlans are general information documents that help *operations-based* exercises run smoothly. They are published and distributed prior to the start of exercise and provide a synopsis of the exercise. In addition to addressing exercise *objectives* and *scope*, ExPlans assign activities and responsibilities for successful exercise execution. They enable *participants* to understand their roles and responsibilities in *exercise planning*, execution, and *evaluation*. The ExPlan is intended for use by exercise *players* and *observers*—therefore, it does not contain detailed *scenario* information that may reduce the realism of the *tasks* to be performed. Players and observers should review all elements of the ExPlan prior to exercise participation.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Exercise Planning Team		The exercise planning team is responsible for all aspects of an exercise, including *exercise planning*, conduct, and *evaluation*. The planning team determines exercise *capabilities*, *tasks,* and *objectives*; tailors the scenario to the entity's needs; and develops documents used in exercise simulation, control, and evaluation. The exercise planning team should be comprised of representatives from each major participating jurisdiction and agency, but be kept to a manageable size. While entities may find it advantageous to include team members with previous exercise planning experience, membership can be modified to fit the type or *scope* of an exercise. Planning team members are ideal selections for *controller* and *evaluator* positions during the exercise because advanced scenario knowledge renders them ineligible to participate as players. An *exercise planning team leader* manages the exercise planning team, which can be structured using the principles of the Incident Command System (ICS), with the following sections: The **Command Staff** is responsible for coordinating all exercise planning activities. Within this group is the exercise planning team leader, who assigns exercise activities and responsibilities, provides guidance, establishes timelines, and monitors the development process. The safety controller and the liaison coordinator report directly to the exercise planning team leader. The **Planning Section** is responsible for compiling and developing all exercise documentation. To accomplish this effectively, the Planning Section also collects and reviews policies, plans, and procedures that will be validated during the exercise. During the exercise, the Planning Section may be responsible for developing simulated actions by agencies not participating in the exercise and setting up a *SimCell* for exercises that necessitate one (such as *FEs*). The **Logistics Section** provides the supplies, materials, facilities, and services that enable the exercise to function smoothly without outside interference or disruption. This group consists of two subsections: service and support. The service section provides transportation, barricading, signage, food and drinks, real-life medical capability, and exercise-site perimeter security. The support section provides communications, purchasing, general supplies, very important personnel (VIP)/*observer* processing, and recruitment/management of *actors*. The **Administration/Finance Section** provides grant management and administrative support throughout exercise development. This group is also responsible for the registration process and coordinates schedules for the exercise planning team, the exercise planning team leader, participating agencies, and the host community or communities.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Exercise Planning Team (continued)		The **Operations Section** provides most of the technical or functional expertise for the participating entities. This group develops *scenarios*, selects evaluation tools, and has personnel with the expertise necessary to serve as evaluators.
Exercise Planning Team Leader		The exercise planning team leader oversees the *exercise planning team*; develops the exercise *project management timeline* and the exercise project management assignment list; assigns exercise responsibilities; provides overall guidance; and monitors the development process.
Exercise Play Area		The exercise play area is the site or facility where the bulk of tactical player activities and *tasks* are demonstrated during an *operations-based* exercise.
Exercise Play Rules		Exercise play rules are the parameters that exercise participants follow during the exercise. Exercise play rules describe appropriate exercise behavior, particularly in the case of real-world emergencies.
Exercise Program Management		Exercise program management consists of the functions required for an entity to sustain a variety of exercises targeted toward preparedness priorities, on an ongoing basis. It includes project management, budgeting, grant management, staff hiring, funding allocation, and expenditure tracking. Program management functions cyclically. First, a *Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan* is developed in consideration of an entity's preparedness priorities. Next, specific exercises are carried out according to the multi-year plan's timelines and milestones. Finally, IP corrective actions identified in exercises are taken into account when developing priorities for the next multi-year plan. Responsibilities for these *tasks* are complementary and require that all relevant parties collaborate to successfully administer exercises.
Exercise Program Manager		The exercise program manager develops a self-sustaining *HSEEP* through program budget management oversight, exercise conduct, and improvement tracking monitoring and reporting.
Exercise Series		This cycle includes exercises held at increasing levels of complexity and annual reviews of program objectives to ensure objectives are met. Multiple exercises are designed in sequence using the *building-block approach*, aimed at achieving a greater capability (e.g., a seminar that leads to a *TTX*, which leads to an *FE*).

Term	Acronym	Definition
Exercise Setup		Exercise setup involves the pre-staging and dispersal of exercise materials. It includes registration materials, documentation, signage, and other equipment, as appropriate.
Facilitated Discussion		During a *discussion-based* exercise, a facilitated discussion is a focused discussion of specific issues using a *facilitator* with functional area or subject matter expertise. Facilitated group discussions occur at individual tables organized by discipline or agency/organization. Facilitated discussions take place before moderated discussions.
Facilitator		During a *discussion-based* exercise, the facilitator is responsible for keeping *participant* discussions on track with the exercise design *objectives* and making sure all issues and objectives are explored as thoroughly as possible within time constraints.
Final Planning Conference	FPC	The FPC is the final forum for the *exercise planning team* to review the process and procedures for exercise conduct, final drafts of all exercise materials, and all logistical requirements. During the FPC, there should be no major changes made to either the design or the *scope* of the exercise, nor to any supporting documentation. The FPC ensures all logistical requirements have been arranged, all outstanding issues have been identified and resolved, and all exercise products are ready for printing.
For Official Use Only	FOUO	FOUO is the term used within DHS to identify unclassified information of a sensitive nature, not otherwise categorized by statute or regulation, the unauthorized disclosure of which could adversely impact a person's privacy or welfare, the conduct of Federal programs, or other programs or operations essential to national interest. Information impacting the National Security of the United States and classified Confidential, Secret, or Top Secret under Executive Order 12958, "Classified National Security Information," as amended, or its predecessor or successor orders, is not to be considered FOUO. FOUO is not to be considered classified information. (From http://www.fas.org/sgp/othergov/dhs-sbu.html)
Foundation		Foundation is the first stage in the exercise process, preceding *Design and Development*. The Foundation stage focuses on developing a project management timeline, establishing milestones, identifying an *exercise planning team*, and scheduling planning conferences.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Friendly Force		In prevention exercises, all State and local law enforcement, and other non-*red-team* designated organizations and agencies (e.g., security forces assigned to key targets) are considered *friendly forces* or *Blue Team*.
Full-Scale Exercise	FSE	An FSE is a multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional activity involving actual deployment of resources in a coordinated response as if a real incident had occurred. An FSE tests many components of one or more capabilities within emergency response and recovery, and is typically used to assess plans, procedures, and coordinated response under crisis conditions. Characteristics of an FSE include mobilized units, personnel, and equipment; a stressful, realistic environment; and scripted exercise scenarios.
Functional Exercise	FE	An FE is a single or multi-agency activity designed to evaluate capabilities and multiple functions using a simulated response. An FE is typically used to: evaluate the management of Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs), command posts, and headquarters; and assess the adequacy of response plans and resources. Characteristics of an FE include simulated deployment of resources and personnel, rapid problem solving, and a highly stressful environment.
Game		A game is a simulation of operations using rules, data, and procedures designed to depict an actual or assumed real-life situation. A game is typically used to: explore the processes and consequences of decision making; conduct “what if” analyses of existing plans; and develop new plans. In general, games use rules, data, and procedures; are designed to depict an actual or assumed real-life situation; often involve two or more teams usually in a competitive environment; and increasingly include models and simulations. Games do not involve the use of actual resources. Games are *discussion-based* exercises.
Ground Truth		Ground Truth is a component of prevention exercise documentation comprised of the detailed elements of the *scenario* that must remain consistent during exercise development and be conducted to ensure that realism is maintained and *objectives* are met in the unscripted move-countermove exercise environment.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Ground Truth Advisor		In *prevention* exercises, the Ground Truth advisor tracks how the moves and countermoves of the adversary (notional and *Red Team*) and players (e.g., law enforcement, intelligence analysts, private industry) change the fabric of the exercise environment, potentially creating additional elements of the Ground Truth, but never detracting from it.
Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program	HSEEP	HSEEP is a *capabilities*- and performance-based exercise program that provides standardized policy, doctrine, and terminology for the *design, development*, conduct, and *evaluation* of homeland security exercises. HSEEP also provides tools and resources to facilitate the management of self-sustaining homeland security exercise programs.
Homeland Security Presidential Directive-5	HSPD-5	HSPD-5, an Executive-Branch-issued policy, required DHS to coordinate with other Federal departments and agencies, as well as State, local, and tribal governments to establish the National Response Plan (NRP) and the *National Incident Management System (NIMS)*.
Homeland Security Presidential Directive-8	HSPD-8	HSPD-8, an Executive-Branch-issued policy, was drafted to strengthen the preparedness of the United States to prevent and respond to threatened or actual domestic terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies by requiring a national domestic all-hazards *preparedness* goal; establishing mechanisms for improved delivery of Federal preparedness assistance to State and local governments; and outlining actions to improve the capabilities of Federal, State, and local entities.
Hot Wash		A hot wash is a *facilitated discussion* held immediately following an exercise among exercise *players* from each functional area. It is designed to capture feedback about any issues, concerns, or proposed improvements players may have about the exercise. The hot wash is an opportunity for players to voice their opinions on the exercise and their own performance. This facilitated meeting allows players to participate in a self-assessment of the exercise play and provides a general assessment of how the entity performed in the exercise. At this time, evaluators can also seek clarification on certain actions and what prompted players to take them. Evaluators should take notes during the hot wash and include these observations in their analysis. The hot wash should last no more than 30 minutes.

Term	Acronym	Definition
HSEEP Toolkit		The HSEEP Toolkit is an interactive, online system for exercise scheduling, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. The HSEEP Toolkit includes the National Exercise Schedule (NEXS) System, Design and Development System (DDS), and Corrective Action Program (CAP) System. The **NEXS System** is the Nation's online comprehensive tool that facilitates scheduling, de-confliction, and synchronization of all national-Level, Federal, State, and local exercises. The **Design and Development System (DDS)** is a project management tool and comprehensive tutorial for the design, development, conduct, and evaluation of exercises. The DDS provides users with the appropriate templates and guidance from the HSEEP volumes for developing timelines, planning teams, and exercise documentation (e.g., Situation Manuals [SitMans], ExPlans, exercise planning conference materials). The DDS is the technological backbone for the planning process described in *HSEEP Volume II: Exercise Planning and Conduct*. The **Corrective Action Program (CAP) System** is a web-based application that enables users to prioritize, track, and analyze improvement plans developed from exercises and real-world events. Features of the CAP System include IP creation and maintenance, corrective action assignment and tracking, and reporting and analysis. CAP System functionality is based on the process described in *HSEEP Volume III: Exercise Evaluation and Improvement Planning*. The CAP System supports the process by which exercise and real-world events can inform and improve exercise programs and other preparedness components.
Improvement Plan	IP	For each task, the IP lists the corrective actions that will be taken, the responsible party or agency, and the expected completion date. The IP is included at the end of the AAR.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Information Sharing Environment Analysis	ISEA	Prior to a prevention exercise, entities can use this process to identify, describe, and depict their State or local information-sharing environment as it pertains to standard operating procedures (SOPs), policies, and systems.
Initial Planning Conference	IPC	The IPC is typically the first step in the planning process and lays the *foundation* for the exercise (unless a *C&O Meeting* is held). Its purpose is to gather input from the exercise planning team on the *scope*; design requirements and conditions (such as assumptions and artificialities); *objectives*; level of participation; and *scenario* variables (e.g., location, threat/hazard selection), and *MSEL*. During the IPC, the exercise planning team decides on exercise location, schedule, duration, and other details required to develop exercise documentation. Planning team members should be assigned responsibility for the *tasks* outlined in the conference.
Inject		Injects are *MSEL* entries that *controllers* must simulate—including directives, instructions, and decisions. Exercise controllers provide injects to exercise *players* to drive exercise play towards the achievement of *objectives*. Injects can be written, oral, televised, and/or transmitted via any means (e.g., fax, phone, e-mail, voice, radio, or sign). Injects can be contextual or contingency. A controller introduces a **contextual inject** to a player to help build the exercise operating environment. For example, if the exercise is designed to test information-sharing capabilities, a MSEL inject can be developed to direct a controller to select an *actor* to portray a suspect. The inject could then instruct the controller to prompt another actor to approach a law enforcement officer and inform him/her that this person was behaving suspiciously. A controller verbally introduces a **contingency inject** to a player if players are not performing the actions needed to sustain exercise play. This ensures that play moves forward, as needed, to adequately test performance of activities. For example, if a simulated secondary device is placed at an incident scene during a terrorism response exercise, but is not discovered, a controller may want to prompt an actor to approach a player to say that he/she witnessed suspicious activity close to the device location. This should prompt the responder's discovery of the device, and result in subsequent execution of the desired notification procedures.
Integrated Timeline		The integrated timeline provides a retrospective timeline of exercise events created during exercise analysis.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Lead Evaluator		The lead evaluator should participate fully as a member of the *exercise planning team*, and should be a senior-level individual familiar with: *prevention*, *protection*, *response*, and/or *recovery* issues associated with the exercise; plans, policies, and procedures of the exercising entity; Incident Command and decision-making processes of the exercising entity; and interagency and/or inter-jurisdictional coordination issues relevant to the exercise. The lead evaluator must have the management skills needed to oversee a team of *evaluators* over an extended process, as well as the knowledge and analytical skills to undertake a thorough and accurate *analysis* of all *capabilities* being tested during an exercise.
Lessons Learned		Lessons learned are knowledge and experience (both positive and negative) derived from observations and historical study of actual operations, training, and exercises. Exercise AAR/IPs should identify lessons learned and highlight *best practices*, and should be submitted to DHS for inclusion in the lessons learned / best practices web portal, www.llis.gov, which serves as a national network for generating, validating, and disseminating lessons learned and best practices.
Master Scenario Events List	MSEL	The MSEL is a chronological timeline of expected actions and scripted events that *controllers* inject into exercise play to generate or prompt *player* activity. It ensures necessary events happen so that all *objectives* are met. Larger, more complex exercises may also employ a *Procedural Flow (ProFlow)*, which differs from the MSEL in that it only contains expected player actions or *events*. The MSEL links simulation to action, enhances exercise experience for players, and reflects an incident or activity meant to prompt *players* to action. Each MSEL record contains a designated *scenario* time; an *event* synopsis; the name of the *controller* responsible for delivering the inject; and, if applicable, special delivery instructions, the *task* and *objective* to be demonstrated, the expected action, the intended player, and a note-taking section.
Master Scenario Events List Conference	MSEL Conference	The MSEL Conference may be held in preparation for more complex, *operations-based* exercises, specifically to review the *scenario* timeline and focus on *MSEL* development.
Media Personnel		Some media personnel may be present as *observers*, pending approval by exercise personnel and exercise support team members. The SimCell may simulate media interaction in order to enhance realism and to meet related exercise *objectives*. A dedicated group of exercise *controllers* should be assigned to manage these groups.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Media Policy		The agency/organization sponsoring the exercise decides whether or not to invite the media. If invited, the media should have an opportunity prior to the exercise to conduct interviews with key planners and *participants.* At *discussion-based* exercises, the media should not be present during the discussion of SOPs, emergency operations plans (EOPs), or any other potentially sensitive information. If the media would like video footage of exercise proceedings and participants, they should be allowed to film from the back of the room until *scenario* discussions begin. This allows participants to speak freely and openly during the exercise without outside distractions or intimidation. During *operations-based* exercises, media may be allowed to film certain activities but should be cautioned not to interfere with exercise play. Unless media are invited to participate in the exercise, a guide—typically a public information officer (PIO) or designee—should escort media at all times. Media policies can prevent public confusion on the day of the exercise and assure the public that the community is working to prepare for real-world incidents.
Mid-Term Planning Conference	MPC	The MPC, an *operations-based* exercise planning conference, is used to discuss exercise organization and staffing concepts; *scenario* and timeline development; and scheduling, logistics, and administrative requirements. It is also a session to review draft documentation (e.g., scenario, *ExPlan*, *C/E Handbook*, *MSEL*). (Note: A *MSEL Conference* can be held in conjunction with or separate from the MPC to review the scenario timeline for the exercise.)
Mission		There are four homeland security missions: (1) *prevent*, (2) *protect* against, (3) *respond* to, and (4) *recover* from acts of terrorism, natural disasters, and other emergencies. Within the missions are the *capabilities* to be achieved and the tasks required to achieve them.
Moderated Discussion		A moderated discussion is a *facilitated*, *discussion-based* forum in which a representative from each functional area breakout presents *participants* with a summary and results from a group's earlier *facilitated discussion*. During moderated discussions, spokespersons summarize the facilitated discussion, present key findings and issues, and discuss any unresolved issues or questions. At the end of the moderated discussion period, the floor is open for questions.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Moulage		Moulage is the makeup applied to *actors* to add realism to an exercise. It includes fake blood, plastic bones, and any other makeup that enables actors to emulate the signs and symptoms on his/her *symptomology card*. Although not required, moulage is encouraged at all *operations-based* exercises. (Note: School drama clubs, military units, community theaters, the American Red Cross, and morticians are common resources for moulage staff.)
Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan		The Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan is the foundational document guiding a successful exercise program. The multi-year plan provides a mechanism for long-term coordination of training and exercise activities toward an entity's *preparedness* goals. This plan describes the program's training and exercise priorities and associated *capabilities*, and aids in employing the *building-block approach* for training and exercise activities. Within the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan, the multi-year schedule graphically illustrates training and exercise activities that support the identified priorities. The schedule is color-coded by priority and presents a multi-year outlook for task and priority achievement. As training and exercises are completed, the document can be annually updated, modified, and revised to reflect changes to the priorities and new capabilities that need to be assessed. The Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan and schedule is produced through the work completed at the *Training and Exercise Plan Workshop (T&EPW)*. The T&EPW focuses on discussion of *capabilities-based planning*, overview of the National Priorities, review of the entity's priorities, and analysis of previous training and exercises. After this information is synthesized, *participants* develop the plan and schedule for their entity.
National Exercise Schedule	NEXS	NEXS is a compilation of all national-level, Federal, State, and local exercises. NEXS provides basic information on each planned exercise including the exercise name, location, date, major *participants*, and points of contact. It also serves as a management tool and reference document for *exercise planning* and enables exercise visibility to planners and leadership.
National Incident Management System	NIMS	The NIMS standard was designed to enhance the ability of the United States to manage domestic incidents by establishing a single, comprehensive system for incident management. It is a system mandated by *HSPD-5* that provides a consistent, nationwide approach for Federal, State, local, and tribal governments; the private sector; and non-governmental organizations to work effectively and efficiently together to *prepare* for, *respond* to, and *recover* from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.

Term	Acronym	Definition
National Planning Scenarios	NPS	The 15 National Planning Scenarios require a wide range of *prevention*, *protection*, *response*, and *recovery tasks* to effectively manage the incidents they describe. They represent a range of potential incidents and were used to develop the *UTL* and the *TCL*.
National Preparedness Goal		The National Preparedness Goal was set to achieve and sustain *capabilities* that enable the Nation to successfully *prevent* terrorist attacks on the homeland and rapidly and effectively *respond* to and recover from any terrorist attack, major disaster, or other emergency that does occur in order to minimize the impact on lives, property, and the economy. This state of national *preparedness* will be achieved by reaching risk-based target levels of capability and sustained by measuring readiness and directing resources to areas of greatest risk and need.
National Strategy for Homeland Security		The purpose of the National Strategy for Homeland Security is to mobilize and organize the homeland from terrorist attacks. This complex mission requires coordinated and focused effort from Federal, State, and local governments; the private sector; and the American people. The strategic objectives of homeland security, in order of priority, are to: • *prevent* terrorist attacks within the United States; • reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism; and • minimize the damage and *recover* from attacks that do occur.
Nunn-Lugar-Domenici Domestic Preparedness Program	NLD DPP	The NLD DPP initiative was designed to enhance the *response capability* of designated cities to respond to acts of terrorism involving weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Much of the *HSEEP design and development* methodology is derived from NLD-DPP.
Objectives		Exercise objectives must be established for every exercise. Well-defined objectives provide a framework for *scenario* development, guide individual organizations' objective development, and inform exercise *evaluation* criteria. Entities should frame exercise objectives with the aim of attaining *capabilities* established as priorities at the Federal, State, and local level, as captured in the entity's *Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan* and schedule. Objectives should reflect specific capabilities that the exercising entity establishes as priorities, and the *tasks* associated with those capabilities. Objectives should be *simple, measurable, achievable, realistic, and task-oriented* (*SMART*). Planners should limit the number of exercise objectives to enable timely execution and to facilitate design of a realistic scenario.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Observer Briefing		An observer briefing is a pre-exercise overview given by one or more members of the *exercise planning team* to educate *observer*s about program background, *scenario*, schedule of *events*, observer limitations, and any other miscellaneous information. (Note: Many times, observers are unfamiliar with public safety procedures and have questions about the activities they see. Designating someone to answer questions, such as a response agency PIO, will prevent observers from asking questions of *players*, *controllers*, or *evaluators*).
Observer/Media Area		The Observer/Media Area is a designated exercise area that provides *observers* and media representatives with a view of exercise play without the potential to interfere. It should be adjacent to the exercise site, but should not allow interference with response routes or egress points. (Note: Because many entities prefer to keep operations of groups such as Special Weapons and Tactics [SWAT] teams, bomb squads, and explosive ordnance disposal [EOD] teams confidential, these activities could take place some distance from the Observer/Media Area.)
Observers		Observers do not directly participate in the exercise; rather, they observe selected segments of the exercise as it unfolds, while remaining separated from player activities. Observers view the exercise from a designated observation area and are asked to remain within the observation area during the exercise. A dedicated group of exercise controllers should be assigned to manage these groups. In a *discussion-based* exercise, observers may support the development of player responses to the situation during the discussion by delivering messages or citing references.
Operations-Based Exercise		Operations-based exercises are a category of exercises characterized by actual response, mobilization of apparatus and resources, and commitment of personnel, usually held over an extended period of time. Operations-based exercises can be used to validate plans, policies, agreements, and procedures. They include *drills*, *FEs*, and *FSEs*. They can clarify roles and responsibilities, identify gaps in resources needed to implement plans and procedures, and improve individual and team performance. (Note: These exercises often follow after, and validate, the lessons learned from discussion-based exercises.)
Participants		Participants are the overarching group that includes all *players*, *controllers*, *evaluators*, and staff involved in conducting an exercise.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Participant Feedback Form		Participant Feedback Forms are used to obtain information on perceptions of the exercise and how well each *participant* thought his/her unit performed. This information can provide insight into why events happened the way they did or why some expected actions did not take place. Participant Feedback Forms are distributed before a *hot wash* and collected at the end, and the *evaluation* team reviews them in order to capture any useful information. Participant Feedback Forms also serve to solicit general feedback on exercise quality, which can be provided to the *exercise planning team* to help implement improvements in future exercises because this contributes to several portions of the *AAR/IP*.
Planning Conferences		The *exercise planning team* holds planning conferences as forums to *design and develop* exercises. The *scope*, type, and complexity of an exercise determines the number of conferences necessary to successfully conduct an exercise. These milestones of the exercise planning process are typically comprised of the *IPC*, the *MPC*, and the *FPC*. Potential additional exercise planning conferences include the *C&O Meeting*, the *MSEL Conference*, and the *Red Team Planning Conference*. *Discussion-based* exercises usually convene IPCs and FPCs, whereas *operations-based* exercises may call for an IPC, MPC, FPC, as well as a MSEL Conference.
Player		Players have an active role in *preventing*, *responding* to, or *recovering* from the risks and hazards presented in the exercise *scenario*, by either discussing (in a discussion-based exercise) or performing (in an *operations-based* exercise) their regular roles and responsibilities. *Players* initiate actions that will respond to and/or mitigate the simulated emergency.
Player Briefing		The player briefing, held immediately prior to an *operations-based* exercise, addresses individual roles and responsibilities, exercise parameters, safety, badges, and any other logistical items. For a *drill* or *FSE*, player briefings typically take place in the *assembly area*.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Preparedness		The Preparedness mission is the range of deliberate, *critical tasks*, and activities necessary to build, sustain, and improve the operational *capability* to *prevent*, *protect* against, *respond* to, and *recover* from domestic incidents. Preparedness is a continuous process involving efforts at all levels of government and between government and private sector and non-governmental organizations to identify threats, determine vulnerabilities, and identify required resources. It is also the existence of plans, procedures, policies, training, and equipment necessary at the Federal, State, and local level to maximize the ability to prevent, respond to, and recover from major incidents. The term "readiness" is used interchangeably with preparedness.
Presentations		Presentations typically start with brief remarks from representatives of the *exercise planning team* or sponsoring entity, and/or senior officials from the governing jurisdiction. After the opening remarks, the presentation moves into a brief introductory and explanatory phase led by a moderator. During this phase, attendees are introduced to *facilitators* and *evaluators*, given background on the exercise process, and advised about their individual roles and responsibilities.
Press Release		A press release is developed and disseminated before an exercise and given to media representatives, the public, *observers*, and VIPs. Press releases typically include an introduction, purpose, *scope*, duration, general *scenario*, and participating agencies.
Prevention		The Prevention mission area encompasses activities that serve to detect and disrupt terrorist threats or actions against the United States and its interests. They are actions taken to avoid an incident or to intervene to stop an incident from occurring, and involve actions taken to prevent the loss of lives and property. Prevention involves applying intelligence and other information to a range of activities that may include such countermeasures as deterrence operations; heightened inspections; improved surveillance and security operations; investigations to determine the full nature and source of the threat; public health and agricultural surveillance and testing processes; immunizations, isolation, or quarantine; and, as appropriate, specific law enforcement operations aimed at deterring, preempting, interdicting, or disrupting illegal activity and apprehending potential perpetrators and bringing them to justice. Prevention also includes activities undertaken by the first responder community during the early stages of an incident to reduce the likelihood or consequences of threatened or actual terrorist attacks.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Prevention Exercises		Prevention exercises can be either *discussion*- or *operations-based* and may focus on issues that pertain to information and intelligence sharing, credible threats, surveillance, and/or opposing force or *Red Team* activity.
Procedural Flow	ProFlow	The ProFlow is an exercise document that outlines a sequential flow of actions anticipated from participating organizations in response to a hypothetical situation. The ProFlow allows *controllers* and *evaluators* to track and monitor expected actions to ensure their completion at designated times. (Note: The ProFlow differs from the *MSEL* in that it contains only expected player actions such as establishing decontamination, triage, treatment, and transport.) Typically, ProFlows are only produced for large-scale, complex exercises.
Project Management		Effective exercise project management ensures identification, development, and management of critical and supportive activities; frequent communication about project status; and use of management plans and timelines (e.g., project management timeline, scheduling software, Gantt charts).
Project Management Timeline		The Project Management Timeline is a tool that lists key dates and milestones, as well as critical exercise planning responsibilities, upon which the *exercise planning team* agrees.
Props		Props are non-functional replications of objects. The presence or discovery of props requires certain actions by exercise *players*. Examples of props include simulated bombs, bomb blast debris (i.e., shrapnel), mannequins or body parts, and foam bricks and beams. Simulants that mimic the effects of chemical or radiological hazards or that cause a positive reading of an actual detection device are also considered props.
Protection		The Protection mission area includes actions to reduce the vulnerability of critical infrastructure or key resources in order to deter, mitigate, or neutralize terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies. Protection focuses on deterrence, mitigation, and *response*-oriented activities to prevent an attack from occurring, whereas prevention centers on the recognition of threats via information sharing and intelligence analysis.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Public Announcement	PA	A public announcement is given to the public before any *operations-based* exercise to alleviate confusion for passing motorists and pedestrians and help the public avoid congestion near the exercise site by providing suggestions for alternate routes. Announcements can be made on local television or radio, in local newspapers, through mass mailings or pamphlets, and/or on signs near the exercise site.
Purpose		The purpose is a broad statement of the reason the exercise is being conducted. The purpose should explain what elements are to be assessed, evaluated, or measured.
Radiological Emergency Preparedness Program	REP Program	The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) established the REP Program to ensure the public health and safety of citizens living around commercial nuclear power plants by protecting them in the event of a nuclear power station accident and informing and educating the public about radiological emergency preparedness. It contributed to *HSEEP* methodology.
Recommendation(s)		Recommendations, based on *root-cause analysis*, are listed in all *AAR/IPs*. Recommendations are the identification of areas for improvement as noted during an exercise.
Recovery		The Recovery mission area is the development, coordination, and execution of service- and site-restoration plans for impacted communities and the reconstitution of government operations and services through individual, private-sector, non-governmental, and public assistance programs that: identify needs and define resources; provide housing and promote restoration; address long-term care and treatment of affected persons; implement additional measures for community restoration; incorporate mitigation measures and techniques, as feasible; evaluate the incident to identify *lessons learned*; and develop initiatives to mitigate the effects of future incidents.
Red Team		The Red Team is a group of subject matter experts (SMEs) of various appropriate disciplinary backgrounds who provide an independent peer review of plans and processes; act as the adversary's advocate; and knowledgeably role-play the adversary, using a controlled, realistic, interactive process during operations planning, training, and exercising. In *prevention* exercises, this group of operators adapt to player decisions and actions according to the prescribed adversary's motivations and tactics, which often provide players with instant feedback.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Red Team Handbook		The Red Team Handbook is used solely *in operations-based prevention* exercises that employ *Red Teams*. This document aids Red Team operators, *safety controllers*, and *evaluators* in the conduct of safe and valid Red Team exercise activity. It also provides essential information (not included in any other exercise documents) to Red Team operators, which enables them to understand their roles in exercise execution.
Red Team Operators		Red Team operators portray the physical entity of the adversary in an *operations-based prevention* exercise. Also called the opposition force (OPFOR).
Red Team Planning Conference		The Red Team Planning Conference, conducted in preparation for a *prevention* exercise, is held to confirm safety redundancies, rules of exercise play, operational plans, and the exercise timeline.
Registration Area		The registration area is where *participants* sign-in and receive exercise identification, such as badges or hats.
Response		The Response mission area focuses on activities that address the short-term, direct effects of an incident. Response includes immediate actions to save lives, protect property, and meet basic human needs. Response also includes the execution of EOPs and incident mitigation activities designed to limit loss of life, personal injury, property damage, and other unfavorable outcomes. As indicated by the situation, response activities include: applying intelligence and other information to lessen the effects or consequences of an incident; increasing security operations; continuing investigations into the nature and source of the threat; conducting ongoing public health and agricultural surveillance and testing processes; performing immunizations, isolation, or quarantine; and conducting specific law enforcement operations aimed at preempting, interdicting, or disrupting illegal activity, and apprehending actual perpetrators and bringing them to justice.
Response Area		The response area is a large space where operations occur (e.g., decontamination, triage, treatment).
Response Route		The response route is the path that responding emergency units follow from an assembly area to a simulated incident.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Risk-Based Scenario		Risk-based scenarios are *scenarios* that accurately represent risks facing the exercising entity (including both natural and man-made threats). Exercises that use risk-based scenarios enable evaluation of the *capabilities* associated with countering that scenario.
Rules of Exercise Play	ROEP	In *prevention* exercises, ROEP is a comprehensive list of rules that provides specific guidance for the behavior of all exercise *participants*. These rules define the boundaries for exercise play; establish limits on *Red Team* activity; ensure that useful information is gathered; and most importantly, ensure participant safety.
Safety Controller		The safety controller is responsible for monitoring exercise safety during exercise setup, conduct, and cleanup. All exercise *controllers* assist the safety controller by reporting any safety concerns. The safety controller should not be confused with the safety officer, who is identified by the incident commander during exercise play.
Scenario		A scenario provides the backdrop and storyline that drive an exercise. The first step in designing a scenario is determining the type of threat/hazard (e.g., chemical, explosive, cyber, natural disaster) to be used in an exercise. The hazards selected for an exercise should realistically stress the capabilities an entity is attempting to improve through its exercise programs. A hazard should also be a realistic representation of potential threats faced by the exercising entity. For *discussion-based* exercises, a scenario provides the backdrop that drives *participant* discussion. For *operations-based* exercises, the scenario should provide background information on the incident catalyst of the exercise. For *prevention* exercises, the scenario should include the *Ground Truth*.
Scope		Scope is an indicator of the level of government or private sector participation in exercise play, regardless of *participant* size. Scope levels include: local, multi-local, regional (within a State), State, multi-State, Federal, national, international, and private sector.
Seminar		Seminars orient *participants* to authorities, strategies, plans, policies, procedures, protocols, resources, concepts, and/or ideas. Seminars provide a good starting point for entities that are developing or making major changes to their plans and procedures.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Senior Controller		The senior controller is responsible for the overall organization of the exercise. The senior controller monitors exercise progress and coordinates decisions regarding deviations or significant changes to the *scenario* caused by unexpected developments during play. The senior controller monitors actions by individual *controllers* and ensures they implement all designated and modified actions at the appropriate time. The senior controller *debriefs controllers* and *evaluators* after the exercise and oversees the setup and takedown of the exercise.
Simulation		(1) An electronic simulation is a method for predicting the results of implementing a model over time. (2) Simulation of non-participating personnel and agencies is a technique for increasing realism in exercises.
Simulation Cell	SimCell	The SimCell is an exercise area where *controllers* generate and deliver *injects*, and receive player responses to non-participating organizations, agencies, and individuals who would likely participate actively in an actual incident. Physically, the SimCell is a working location for a number of qualified professionals who portray representatives of non-participating organizations, agencies, and individuals who would likely participate during an actual incident.
Simulators		Simulators are control staff personnel who role-play as non-participating organizations or individuals. They most often operate out of the *SimCell*, but may occasionally have face-to-face contact with players. Simulators function semi-independently under the supervision of SimCell *controllers*, enacting roles (e.g., as media reporters or next-of-kin) in accordance with instructions provided in the *MSEL*. All simulators are ultimately accountable to the exercise director and *senior controller*.
Situation Manual	SitMan	The SitMan is a handbook provided to all *participants* in *discussion-based* exercises, particularly *TTXs*. The SitMan provides background information on the exercise *scope*, schedule, and *objectives*. It also presents the *scenario* narrative that will drive participant discussions during the exercise. (Note: The SitMan should mirror the exercise briefing, support the scenario narrative, and allow participants to read along while watching events unfold).

Term	Acronym	Definition
Simple, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Task-Oriented	SMART	SMART is a set of guidelines for developing viable exercise *objectives*.
Special Effects		Special effects are technical, mechanical, or electronic *scenario* enhancements. Special effects typically require trained and licensed personnel, special permission for use, and additional safety and/or security precautions. Examples include the employment of pyrotechnics or explosives.
Sponsor		The sponsor is the primary funding organization for an exercise.
Subject Matter Expert	SME	SMEs add functional knowledge and expertise in a specific area or in performing a specialized job, task, or skill to the *exercise planning team*. They help to make the *scenario* realistic and plausible, and ensure entities have the appropriate *capabilities* to respond.
Support Staff		Exercise support staff includes individuals who are assigned administrative and logistical support tasks during the exercise (e.g., registration, catering).
Symptomology Card		Symptomology cards are provided to each *actor* used in a *response*-focused exercise. Each card is unique, containing the signs and symptoms the actor will portray, as well as information for medical providers. The actors are instructed to keep these cards with them at all times during the exercise, and to not step out of character except in the event of a real emergency. At a minimum, symptomology cards should include: vital signs; symptoms; trauma injuries; acting instructions (e.g., disorientation, emotional distress); and special needs (e.g., language barriers, physical limitations).

Term	Acronym	Definition
Tabletop Exercise	TTX	TTXs are intended to stimulate discussion of various issues regarding a hypothetical situation. They can be used to assess plans, policies, and procedures or to assess types of systems needed to guide the *prevention* of, *response* to, or *recovery* from a defined incident. During a TTX, senior staff, elected or appointed officials, or other key personnel meet in an informal setting to discuss simulated situations. TTXs are typically aimed at facilitating understanding of concepts, identifying strengths and shortfalls, and/or achieving a change in attitude. *Participants* are encouraged to discuss issues in depth and develop decisions through slow-paced problem-solving rather than the rapid, spontaneous decision-making that occurs under actual or simulated emergency conditions. TTXs can be breakout (i.e., groups split into functional areas) or plenary (i.e., one large group).
Target Capabilities List	TCL	The TCL is a list of *capabilities* that provides guidance on the specific capabilities that Federal, State, tribal, and local entities are expected to develop and maintain to *prevent*, *protect* against, *respond* to, and *recover* from incidents of national significance, including terrorism or natural disasters, in order to maintain the level of preparedness set forth in the *National Preparedness Goal*.
Tasks		Tasks are specific, discrete actions that individuals or groups must complete or discuss during an exercise to successfully carry out an activity. Successful execution of performance measures and tasks, either sequentially or in parallel, is the foundation for activities, which are, in turn, the *foundation* of *capabilities*.
Terrorism Prevention Exercise Program	TPEP	TPEP is dedicated to providing participants at the Federal, State, tribal, and local levels the tools needed to demonstrate, evaluate, and improve the capability to prevent terrorism through information- and intelligence-based exercises. TPEP uses *HSEEP* methodology, but focuses on pre-incident operations.
Training and Exercise Plan Workshop	T&EPW	A T&EPW is usually conducted in order to create a *Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan*. During the *workshop*, *participants* review priority *preparedness capabilities* and coordinate exercise and training activities that can improve those capabilities. As a result of the workshop, the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan outlines multi-year timelines and milestones for execution of specific training and exercise activities.

Term	Acronym	Definition
Trusted Agent		Trusted agents are the individuals on the *exercise planning team* who are trusted not to reveal scenario details to players prior to exercise conduct.
Universal Adversary	UA	UA, a fictional adversary, is an exercise tool created by compiling known terrorist motivations, doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) in live, virtual, and constructive simulations. A UA is employed to build the *Ground Truth* and anticipated countermoves for *prevention*-focused exercises.
Universal Adversary Advisor	UA Advisor	In prevention exercises, the *UA* advisor is responsible for providing the *MSEL* and *Red Team* developers with realistic *scenario* and timeline guidance based on expertise in the given UA threat category or local threat environment.
Universal Adversary Profile	UA Profile	The UA Profile provides detailed background information on the threat category being portrayed, including the typology, ideology, motivation, tactics, capability, objective, and individuals associated with the fictional group.
Universal Task List	UTL	The UTL is a comprehensive menu of *tasks* derived from all tasks that may be performed in major incidents as illustrated by the National Planning Scenarios. Entities at all levels of government should use the UTL as a reference to help them develop proficiency through training and exercises to perform their assigned missions and *tasks* during major incidents.
Venue		A venue is the primary location of exercise conduct. In *operations-based* exercises, this is typically the facility or site the *scenario* will affect. For example, if a non-persistent chemical agent (e.g., Sarin) is selected as the threat/hazard, the venue should not be an open-air facility (e.g., stadium, park) because of the agent's dissipating characteristics. (Note: The venue used to conduct the exercise does not necessarily have to be the same venue described in the exercise scenario. For example, a stadium parking lot may be used to simulate an airport runway).

Term	Acronym	Definition
Workshop		The workshop, a type of *discussion-based* exercise, represents the second tier of exercises in the *building-block approach*. Although similar to *seminars*, workshops differ in two important aspects: increased *participant* interaction, and a focus on achieving or building a product (e.g., plans, policies). A workshop is typically used to: test new ideas, processes, or procedures; train groups in coordinated activities; and obtain consensus. Workshops often use breakout sessions to explore parts of an issue with smaller groups.

Appendix C: Exercise Planning Timelines

Discussion-Based Exercise Planning Timeline

Phase	Activity	Associated Materials	Estimated Workdays/Week
Exercise Foundation	Develop exercise budget	• Sponsor agency's budget format	5 months before exercise
	Identify exercise planning team members	• Exercise planning team organizational chart	5 months before exercise
Initial Planning Conference (IPC)	Develop IPC materials	• IPC Presentation • Agenda • Sign-in sheets • Invitations • Read-ahead packet • Participating agency list	3–4 weeks before IPC
	Send IPC Invitations and read-ahead packet to exercise planning team	• Invitations • Read-ahead packet	2–3 weeks before IPC
	Finalize IPC materials	• IPC presentation • Agenda • Sign-in sheets • Project management timeline	3 days before IPC
	Conduct IPC	• IPC presentation • Agenda • Sign-in sheets • Project management timeline	3 months before exercise
	Provide IPC minutes to exercise planning team	• IPC minutes	7–9 days after IPC

Phase	Activity	Associated Materials	Estimated Workdays/Week
Final Planning Conference (FPC)	Develop draft Situation Manual (SitMan)	• Draft SitMan	2 weeks before FPC
	Finalize FPC materials	• FPC Presentation • Agenda • Project management timeline • Sign-in sheet • Draft SitMan	1 week before FPC
	Conduct FPC	• FPC Presentation • Agenda • Project management timeline • Sign-in sheet • Draft SitMan	6 weeks prior to exercise
	Conduct walkthrough of exercise site facilities	• None	Following conclusion of FPC
	Provide FPC minutes to exercise planning team	• FPC minutes	7–9 days after FPC
Exercise Conduct	Finalize SitMan and exercise presentation	• SitMan • Presentation	10 days before exercise
	Setup facility / review presentation	• Presentation • Room layout	1 day before exercise
	Conduct Exercise	• All exercise documents • Sign-in sheets • Badges	Day of exercise
	Conduct hot wash / debrief	• Participant Feedback Forms	Immediately after exercise
After Action Report / Improvement Plan (AAR/IP)	Develop draft AAR/IP	• Hot wash minutes • Participant Feedback Forms • Draft AAR/IP	3 weeks after exercise

Phase	Activity	Associated Materials	Estimated Workdays/Week
AAR/IP *(continued)*	Send draft AAR/IP to sponsor agency and exercise planning team	• Draft AAR/IP	4 weeks after exercise
After Action Conference	Conduct After Action Conference	• Presentation • Agenda • Sign-in sheets • Draft AAR/IP	5 weeks after exercise
Final AAR/IP	Finalize AAR/IP and distribute to sponsor agency and exercise planning team	• Final AAR/IP	2 months after exercise
	Share lessons learned, areas for improvement, best practices, and successes identified in final AAR/IP	• Final AAR/IP	2 months after exercise

Operations-Based Exercise Planning Timeline

Phase	Activity	Associated Materials	Estimated Workdays/Week
Exercise Foundation	Develop exercise budget	• Sponsor agency's budget format	Minimum 7 months before exercise
	Identify exercise planning team members	• Exercise planning team organizational chart	Minimum 7 months before exercise
Initial Planning Conference (IPC)	Develop IPC materials	• IPC presentation • Agenda • Sign-in sheets • Sample objectives • Participating agency list	3–4 weeks before IPC
	Send IPC invitations and read-ahead packet to exercise planning team	• Invitations • Read-ahead packet	2–3 weeks before IPC
	Finalize IPC materials	• IPC presentation • Agenda • Sign-in sheets • Project management timeline • Sample objectives • Participating agency list	3 days before IPC
	Conduct IPC	• IPC presentation • Agenda • Sign-in sheets • Project management timeline • Sample objectives • Participating agency list	Minimum 6 months before exercise
	Provide IPC minutes to exercise planning team	• IPC minutes	11 days after IPC

Phase	Activity	Associated Materials	Estimated Workdays/Week
Mid-Term Planning Conference (MPC)	Develop draft Exercise Plan (ExPlan)	• Draft ExPlan	30 days before MPC
	Develop draft Master Scenario Events List (MSEL)	• Draft MSEL	Minimum 5 days before MPC
	Finalize MPC materials	• Draft ExPlan • Draft MSEL • MPC presentation • Agenda • Sign-in sheets • Project management timeline	5 days before MPC
	Conduct MPC	• 4–6 hours	Minimum 3 months before exercise
	Conduct exercise site walkthrough	• None	Following conclusion of MPC
	Provide MPC minutes to exercise planning team	• MPC minutes	14 days after MPC
Final Planning Conference (FPC)	Finalize ExPlan	• ExPlan	Minimum 75 days before FPC
	Develop draft Controller and Evaluator (C/E) Handbook	• Draft C/E Handbook	Minimum 10 days before FPC
	Develop media / public information documentation	• Media / public information documentation	Minimum 10 days before FPC
	Develop draft communications plan	• Draft communications plan	Minimum 10 days before FPC

Phase	Activity	Associated Materials	Estimated Workdays/Week
FPC *(continued)*	Finalize FPC materials	• Media / public information documentation • Draft C/E Handbook • Draft communications plan • Draft MSEL • ExPlan • FPC presentation • Agenda • Sign-in sheets • Project management timeline	Minimum 5 days before FPC
	Conduct FPC	• Media / public information documentation • Draft C/E Handbook • Draft communications plan • Draft MSEL • ExPlan • FPC presentation • Agenda • Sign-in sheets • Project management timeline	Minimum 6 weeks before exercise
	Finalize C/E assignments	• C/E assignments	Prior to conclusion of FPC
	Finalize assembly area handout	• Assembly area handout	Prior to conclusion of FPC
	Provide FPC minutes to exercise planning team	• FPC minutes	2 days after FPC
Exercise Conduct	Distribute ExPlan to participating agencies and/or organizations	• ExPlan	25 days before exercise

Phase	Activity	Associated Materials	Estimated Workdays/Week
Exercise Conduct *(continued)*	Conduct C/E training/briefing and distribute Controller Packet and Evaluator Packet	• Presentation • Controller Packet and Evaluator Packet (C/E Handbook, MSEL, communications plan, C/E assignments)	Minimum 1 day before exercise
	Set up facility	• None	1 day before exercise
	Conduct exercise participant briefings (and moulage, if applicable)	• Actor brief • Actor waiver forms • Sign-in sheets • Badges • Triage/symptom tags • Player brief • Media/observer brief	Just prior to start of exercise
	Conduct exercise	• All exercise documents	Day of exercise
	Conduct hot wash	• Participant Feedback Forms	Maximum 2 hours after exercise
	Conduct C/E debrief	• C/E debrief presentation	Maximum 1 day after exercise
	Provide hot wash minutes, C/E debrief minutes, and Participant Feedback Forms to exercise planning team	• Hot wash minutes • C/E debrief minutes • Participant Feedback Forms	3–4 days after exercise
After Action Report / Improvement Plan (AAR/IP)	Develop draft AAR/IP	• Draft AAR/IP	2–3 weeks after exercise
	Provide draft AAR/IP to sponsor agency and exercise planning team	• Draft AAR/IP	4 weeks after exercise
After Action Conference	Conduct After Action Conference	• After Action Conference Presentation • Agenda • Sign-in sheets • Draft AAR/IP	5 weeks after exercise

Phase	Activity	Associated Materials	Estimated Workdays/Week
Final AAR/IP	Finalize AAR/IP and distribute to sponsor agency and exercise planning team	• Final AAR/IP	60 days after exercise
	Share lessons learned, areas for improvement, best practices, and successes identified in final AAR/IP	• Final AAR/IP	60 days after exercise
	Track improvements	• Final AAR/IP	Continuous, with annual reviews