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**[EXERCISE TITLE]**

**Facilitator Guide**

[ORGANIZATION NAME]

[YEAR MONTH DAY]

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# **INTRODUCTION**

This document serves as the [Insert Exercise Title] Facilitator Guide. This document is to be used in tandem with the Situation Manual.

This document provides guidance to assist the exercise facilitator and should not be given to exercise players. It gives the approximate timing of delivery for each module and provides talking points, supplemental questions, and key action items to be addressed during  exercise conduct.

# **TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE FACILITATION**

Facilitators play a key role in exercise play as they are responsible for ensuring that participant discussions remain focused on the exercise objectives and making sure all issues are explored as thoroughly as possible within the available time. Effective facilitation is crucial to ensuring the effectiveness of exercise play in developing participants’ skills and knowledge and contributing to their overall experience. Outlined below are tips and key considerations for ensuring effective facilitation.

* Set expectations (i.e., exercise etiquette, instructions for play, etc.) at the beginning of the exercise
* Remind participants that this is a no-fault environment at the beginning and throughout the exercise
* Encourage all participants to actively participate in discussions
* Monitor conversations and ensure that they remain focused on the exercise objectives. If the conversation begins to drift from the objectives of the module, guide the conversation back to the module objectives and key discussion points.
* Utilize a “parking lot” methodology to document key points raised by participants that while valid could veer discussions from the exercise objectives and/or exercise schedule for future discussion
* Avoid dominating discussions or lecturing participants. Instead, attempt to guide participants’ discussions towards other considerations utilizing your expertise and experience.
* Keep the pace of the exercise on track. While exercise play may deviate slightly from the timeline, avoid spending too much time on a module.
* Capture key findings and discussion points throughout the exercise. For larger or more complex exercises, designate a scribe to capture this information.

# **EXERCISE OVERVIEW**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Exercise Title** | [Insert the formal name of exercise, which should match the name in the document header] |
| **Exercise Date(s)** | [Indicate the start and end dates of the exercise] |
| **Scope** | This exercise is a [exercise type], planned for [exercise duration] at [exercise location]. Exercise play is limited to [exercise parameters]. |
| **Mission Area(s)** | [Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and/or Recovery] |
| **Objectives** | [List exercise objectives (i.e., the goals of exercise play)] |
| **Threat or Hazard** | [List the threat or hazard] |
| **Scenario** | [Insert a brief overview of the exercise scenario (2-3 sentences)] |
| **Sponsor** | [Insert the name of the sponsor organization, as well as any grant programs being utilized, if applicable] |
| **Participating Organizations** | [Insert a list of organizations participating in the exercise.] |
| **Point of Contact** | NAME  ORGANIZATION  TITLE  PHONE  EMAIL |

# **Exercise Structure**

Outlined below is a breakdown of the exercise components to help guide the facilitator in exercise conduct. Provided below are key talking points, relevant notes, follow-up questions, and expected/anticipated participant actions to assist the facilitator in ensuring that the exercise remains on track and meets the exercise objectives.

|  |
| --- |
| **Definitions** |
| **Scenario:** A description of the simulated sequence of events for an exercise that helps inform and drive exercise play |
| **Discussion Question:** Question developed to foster and guide discussion related to critical issues and decisions surrounding the scenario |
| **Key Task:** Actions participants are expected to complete during that module based on the information provided in the scenario (i.e., activate the organization’s Emergency Operations Plan) |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **WELCOME AND OVERVIEW [START TIME]** | | | |
| **Time** | **Topic/Issue** | **Facilitator Notes/Questions** | **Key Participant Tasks** |
| **[HH:MM]** | **Exercise Administrative Remarks and Guidelines** | *Review expectations of exercise participants:*   * Please silence your cell phones * In case of an emergency, the emergency exits are located [INSERT LOCATION(S)]. * Restrooms are located [INSERT LOCATION(S)]. * Please fully participate in the exercise and discussions.   *Briefly review the exercise guidelines with participants:*   * This exercise is conducted in a **no-fault environment**. Varying viewpoints, even disagreements, are expected and encouraged. * There is **no “hidden agenda”** nor are there any trick questions. * Please assume the exercise scenario is plausible and events occur as they are presented. * Base your responses on **existing** plans, policies, procedures, capabilities, and resources. * Decisions are **not precedent-setting**. Consider different approaches and suggest improvements. * The exercise will be evaluated, but individual players will **not** be evaluated. Evaluation will focus on the ability to meet exercise objectives and provide feedback on how the organization can improve upon its incident management capabilities. * You may leave the exercise with identified gaps or ideas for improving the organization’s policies and procedures. | **N/A** |
| **[HH:MM]** | **Exercise Overview** | *Briefly review the exercise purpose with participants:*   * The intent of the exercise is to [INSERT OVERALL OBJECTIVE (I.E., TEST THE ORGANIZATION’S ABILITY TO RESPOND TO AN ACTIVE THREAT)] * The exercise will address the following mission area(s): [Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, Recovery] | **N/A** |
| **[HH:MM]** | **Exercise Structure** | *Briefly review the structure of the exercise with participants:*   * The exercise is a [INSERT EXERCISE TYPE] exercise. * The exercise will last approximately [INSERT DURATION]. Participants will be given breaks throughout the exercise. * The exercise will utilize a scenario with [#] modules to examine the operational response of [INSERT ORGANIZATIONS] to [INSERT THREAT/HAZARD]. * Each module will consist of three main activities: a scenario overview, facilitated discussions, and key tasks to be completed. * The scenario overview will include a detailed description of the current scenario. * Once the scenario overview is provided participants will engage in facilitated discussions dictated by a set of specific discussion questions. * Participants will also be responsible for completing key tasks for each module | **N/A** |
| **MODULE 1: [TITLE] [START TIME]** | | | |
| **Time** | **Topic/Issue** | **Facilitator Notes/Questions** | **Key Participant Tasks** |
| **[HH:MM]** | **Module 1 Scenario Overview** | **[DATE, TIME]**   * [INSERT KEY SCENARIO DETAILS] * [INSERT KEY SCENARIO DETAILS] * [INSERT KEY SCENARIO DETAILS] | **N/A** |
| **[HH:MM]** | **Module 1 Discussion Questions** | 1. [INSERT DISCUSSION QUESTION]    1. *Notes: [INSERT NOTES, FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS, BACKGROUND INFROMATION]* 2. [INSERT DISCUSSION QUESTION]    1. *Notes: [INSERT NOTES, FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS, BACKGROUND INFROMATION]* 3. [INSERT DISCUSSION QUESTION]    1. *Notes: [INSERT NOTES, FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS, BACKGROUND INFROMATION]* 4. [INSERT DISCUSSION QUESTION]    1. *Notes: [INSERT NOTES, FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS, BACKGROUND INFROMATION]* | * [INSERT KEY ACTIVITIES/POINTS PARTICIPANTS ARE EXPECTED TO UNDERTAKE] * [INSERT KEY ACTIVITIES/POINTS PARTICIPANTS ARE EXPECTED TO UNDERTAKE] |
| **MODULE 2: [TITLE] [START TIME]** | | | |
| **Time** | **Topic/Issue** | **Facilitator Notes/Questions** | **Key Participant Tasks** |
| **[HH:MM]** | **Module 2 Scenario Overview** | **[DATE, TIME]**   * [INSERT KEY SCENARIO DETAILS] * [INSERT KEY SCENARIO DETAILS] * [INSERT KEY SCENARIO DETAILS] | **N/A** |
| **[HH:MM]** | **Module 2 Discussion Questions** | 1. [INSERT DISCUSSION QUESTION]    1. *Notes: [INSERT NOTES, FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS, BACKGROUND INFROMATION]* 2. [INSERT DISCUSSION QUESTION]    1. *Notes: [INSERT NOTES, FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS, BACKGROUND INFROMATION]* 3. [INSERT DISCUSSION QUESTION]    1. *Notes: [INSERT NOTES, FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS, BACKGROUND INFROMATION]* 4. [INSERT DISCUSSION QUESTION]    1. *Notes: [INSERT NOTES, FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS, BACKGROUND INFROMATION]* | * [INSERT KEY ACTIVITIES/POINTS PARTICIPANTS ARE EXPECTED TO UNDERTAKE] * [INSERT KEY ACTIVITIES/POINTS PARTICIPANTS ARE EXPECTED TO UNDERTAKE] |
| **HOTWASH [START TIME]** | | | |
| **Time** | **Topic/Issue** | **Facilitator Notes/Questions** | **Key Participant Tasks** |
| **[HH:MM]** | **Hotwash** | *Conduct a hotwash with exercise participants to debrief the exercise and provide participants with the opportunity to discuss their general observations:*   * Ask participants the following questions:   + Are there any other issues you would like to discuss that were not raised?   + What strengths did you observe in relation to meeting exercise objectives?   + What areas should be examined further or need additional work (areas for improvement)?   + Was the exercise beneficial? Did it help you prepare for a real-world incident or future exercises?   + What did you gain from the exercise?   + How can we improve future exercises and tests?   The facilitator should also hand out a participant feedback form to capture the responses in writing for use in the After-Action Report for those that may not have spoken up during the hotwash. | **N/A** |
| **CLOSING REMARKS [START TIME]** | | | |
| **Time** | **Topic/Issue** | **Facilitator Notes/Questions** | **Key Participant Tasks** |
| **[HH:MM]** | **Closing Remarks** | *Briefly summarize the exercise and next steps* | **N/A** |
| **END EXERCISE (EndEx) [TIME]** | | | |
| **Time** | **Topic/Issue** | **Facilitator Notes/Questions** | **Key Participant Tasks** |
| **[HH:MM]** | **EndEx** | *Adjourn and collect participant feedback forms* | **N/A** |