

Overview of Exercises





Defining Emergency Exercises

Exercise is the generic term for the range of activities undertaken by an agency, or a group of agencies, to **test readiness to respond** to emergencies or to evaluate their response plan, or success of training and development programs.

Excerpt from *Defining Emergency Exercises: A working guide to the terminology used in practicing emergency response in communities and public health agencies*; Columbia University School of Nursing Center for Health Policy (January, 2004)



Why Exercise?

- Identify successes and strengths to be maintained and built upon
- Identify areas needing improvement
- Educate on plans, policies, and procedures
- Educate on the potential complexities of a specific emergency scenario
- Improve organizational coordination and communications

Why Exercise? (continued)

- Train personnel in roles and responsibilities
- Improve individual performance
- Satisfy regulatory and/or funding requirements
- Evaluate response systems





Exercise Categories

Discussion-based exercises

- Participant interaction/conversation, low stress, cost effective, information sharing, discussion of issues around a situation

Operations-based exercises

- Play roles, realistic environment, test skills, simulated emergency situation



Exercise Types

Discussion-based

- Seminar/Orientation
- Workshop
- **Tabletop Exercise**

Operations-based

- Drill
- Functional Exercise
- Full Scale Exercise



Discussion-Based Exercise: Tabletop Exercise

Purpose

- Focus on constructive problem solving as a group
- Identify strengths and shortfalls of a plan or policy
- Assess recommended revisions to current policies, procedures, and plans
- Assess interagency coordination

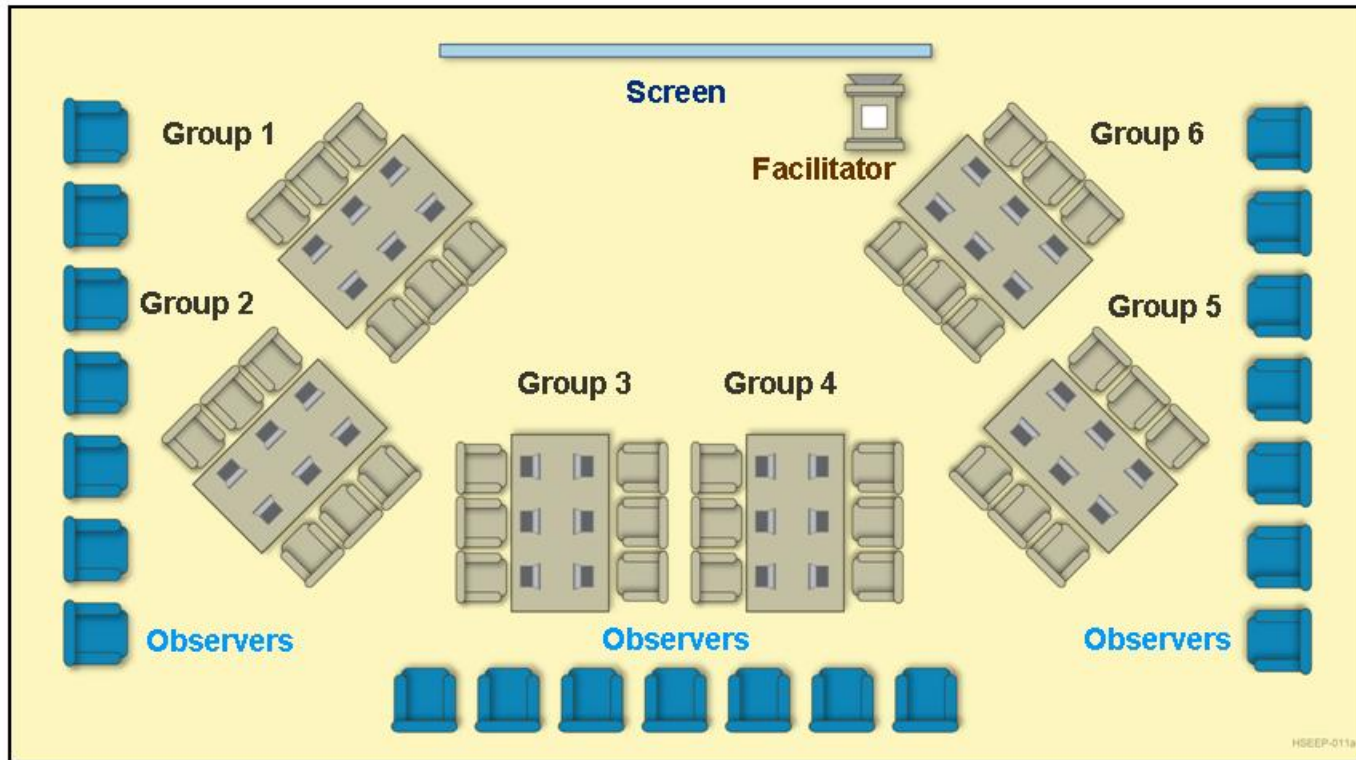
Tabletop Exercise

Method

- A discussion guided by a facilitator based on a simulated emergency situation



Tabletop Exercise



Homeland
Security

HSEEP-011a



Tabletop Exercise

Advantages (FEMA Exercise Design Manual)

- A good way to acquaint key personnel with emergency responsibilities, procedures, and one another
- An effective method for reviewing plans, procedures, and policies
- Requires only a modest commitment in terms of time, cost, and resources

Tabletop Exercise

Disadvantages (FEMA Exercise Design Manual)

- Lacks realism and thus does not provide a true test of an emergency management system's capabilities
- Provides only a superficial exercise of plans, procedures, and staff capabilities
- Does not provide a practical way to demonstrate system overload

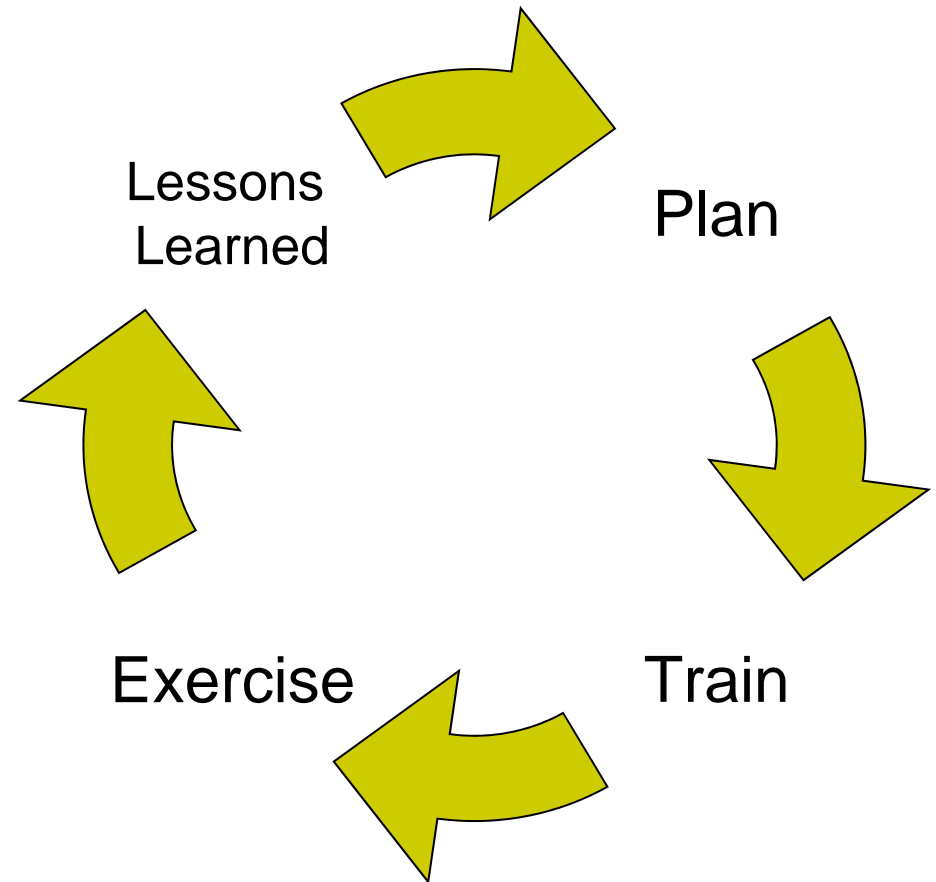


Designing a Table Top to Meet Your Needs

- Identify exercise objectives
- Determine exercise scenario:
 - Exercise threat or specific agent
 - Exercise location, date, duration
- Identify exercise participants

Planning Continuum

- Plan
- Train
- Exercise
- Improvement Plan





Questions/Discussion

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