



Colorado Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program

North Central Region

Special Needs/Special Needs/Adult Care Facility Tabletop Exercise

Exercise Plan (EXPLAN)

Preface

The purpose of publishing an Exercise Plan (EXPLAN) is to aid exercise planners in the design of an effective exercise. An EXPLAN also enables participants to understand their roles and responsibilities in exercise planning, execution, and evaluation. This EXPLAN was produced in collaboration with the North Central Region exercise design team. This EXPLAN is tangible evidence of the public safety partnership in response to a terrorist threat or an act of terrorism. Exercises are the culmination of training toward a collective level of preparedness. Documentation such as this EXPLAN maps the course to improving collective readiness.

Administrative Handling Instructions

1. The title of this document is the *North Central Region Special Needs/Adult Care Facility Tabletop Exercise Plan*.
2. This document should be safeguarded, handled, transmitted, and stored in accordance with appropriate security directives. Reproduction of this document, in whole or in part, without prior approval from *North Central Region* is prohibited.

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Part 1. General Information

Purpose

An Exercise Plan (EXPLAN) gives planners from participating organizations the information necessary to plan, design, and conduct an exercise. It is provided to familiarize appropriate agencies with the community's intent to conduct an interagency exercise, their roles and responsibilities in planning and execution, and the capabilities of the community to respond to an act of terrorism.

This EXPLAN provides planning guidance for the conduct of a tabletop exercise for an adult care facility. This EXPLAN is based on planning factors and estimates available at the time of preparation, and it is subject to modification during final exercise planning and preparation. The Controller and Evaluator (CE) Handbook complements this EXPLAN and provides detailed guidance for conduct of the exercise.

Exercise play is scheduled for four hours, including a post-exercise hot wash, or until the Exercise Director determines that the exercise objectives have been accomplished, and announces the end of the exercise (ENDEX).

Background

North Central Region recognizes its responsibility to protect the public from, and mitigate the consequences of, the hazards associated with acts of terrorism, including the necessity for a properly integrated response in the event of such an incident. With this responsibility in mind, the North Central Region has developed policies and procedures to respond to a terrorism incident and has determined the need to conduct exercises testing these protocols.

Exercise Concept and Scope

Scope of Play. The exercise will be conducted through a tabletop format and will focus on the response efforts of a facility tasked with the care of at-risk populations.

Assumptions. Emergency services and facility personnel who respond to incident scenarios will operate in accordance with existing plans, procedures, and practices during this exercise. The goals and objectives of the exercise will be consistent with functional area operations and technical plans and procedures, whenever possible, as long as safety, cost effectiveness, and prudence are not compromised.

Artificialities. Exercise artificialities will detract from realism; however, exercise planners and participants accept these artificialities in order to facilitate accomplishment of the exercise objectives. Surrogates may be playing in place of some key decision makers. The surrogates, in most instances, will be junior to the principals they represent. Thus, the surrogates' actions during the exercise may not reflect the same actions that might be taken by their respective principals. The exercise will be played in real time. Some events, however, may require time jumps or may be accelerated to meet exercise objectives.

Design Objectives

The following design objectives were selected by the Special Needs/Adult Care Facility tabletop exercise planning team:

1. Test the effectiveness of the facility emergency operations plan.
2. Demonstrate communication and coordination among staff.
3. Demonstrate coordination activities with outside response agencies.

Exercise Scenario

The following variables were selected by the Special Needs/Adult Care Facility tabletop exercise planning team to be included in this exercise scenario:

1. The potential for a facility evacuation or the need to shelter-in-place.
2. The potential for the presence of hazardous materials.
3. The potential for mass casualties.

Scenario Tools. Scenario tools are used to initiate and stimulate the exercise play and inject scenario events. These include a Master Scenario Events List (MSEL) that outlines benchmarks or actions anticipated during the exercise. Part of the MSEL may include scripted messages, known as injects, for introduction into exercise play. A summary timeline is also available for use by controllers and evaluators.

The MSEL has been developed to ensure continuous play during stated exercise hours. If a sufficient level of exercise intensity cannot be maintained as a result of actual play or injects, controllers may stimulate additional player responses to achieve exercise objectives in coordination with the Exercise Director.

Scenario Confidentiality. This exercise may pose politically sensitive issues and may portray detailed response plans and potential response shortcomings. Planners and participants must treat exercise-related information as sensitive. Information related to the exercise may not be reproduced or released without the express consent of North Central Region.

This is an unclassified exercise. The control of information is based more on public sensitivity regarding the nature of the exercise than on actual exercise content. To meaningfully evaluate current plans and policies, normal operating procedures are used for all player communications during the exercise. Media guidance is pre-coordinated in the event of public inquiries.

All written or typed material generated during the planning and conduct of this exercise should be treated as sensitive. All material generated during this exercise should be disposed of as sensitive waste when no longer needed to maintain exercise security and confidentiality.

Some exercise material is intended for the exclusive use of exercise planners, controllers, and evaluators; while players may view other material. All exercise participants may view the EXPLAN, but the CE Handbook is not intended for exercise players. All exercise participants

should use appropriate guidelines to ensure the proper control of information within their areas and protect this material in accordance with current North Central Region directives.

Exercise Control and Evaluation

General. This section describes the exercise control concept and delineates associated responsibilities for the management of exercise activities. The CE Handbook contains more detailed materials, procedures, and guidance designed to aid in the conduct of the exercise.

Concept for Exercise Control. An exercise control team will be used to manage exercise play. The scope of play and number of participating agencies will require close cooperation throughout the exercise planning process. An essential element for the successful conduct of this exercise will be the integration of all exercise controllers into a cohesive team.

Exercise Director and Supporting Controllers. The overall control of the exercise will be the responsibility of the Exercise Director and the supporting controllers. Controllers will be responsible for monitoring play and injecting designated events to specified players and player organizations. Controllers will act as moderators to explain or clarify the physical surroundings during play. A comprehensive exercise orientation will be provided to controllers during the CE Briefing.

Media. Media personnel will be attending the exercise and will be confined to designated media/observer areas.

Controller Communications. The principal method of communications for controllers during the exercise will be face-to-face communications. Exercise controllers may also have access to cellular and/or landline phones that will enable them to communicate control information to other exercise controllers.

Controller Responsibilities. Controllers will be responsible for monitoring exercise progress and coordinating decisions regarding any deviations or significant changes to the scenario caused by unexpected developments during play. Any changes that impact the scenario or affect other areas of play must be coordinated with the Exercise Director. Each controller will manage exercise play by implementing the MSEL and by functioning, as required, to simulate non-participating elements. Controller duties are detailed in the CE Handbook.

Exercise Safety. Safety throughout the exercise is paramount. Safety issues are detailed in Part 3 (Operations) of this EXPLAN, including procedures for initiating a response to real-world emergencies.

Concept of Exercise Evaluation. This exercise enables participants to assess current response capabilities to an emergency incident, to identify strengths and weaknesses, and to identify future training needs. The exercise will focus on critical decisions, and coordination of outside response assets necessary to respond to an emergency incident. Evaluators will be positioned at functional locations to assist in the overall identification of issues.

Evaluators. Evaluators work as a team with controllers and do not interact with players. Evaluators will record events and ensure documentation is submitted for review and inclusion in

the After Action Report (AAR) / Improvement Plan (IP). Evaluators will not interfere with the integrity of the exercise or players. All questions raised during the exercise will be addressed by the onsite controllers.

Handbooks and Exercise Evaluation Guide (EEG). The CE Handbook will be used to guide the conduct and evaluation of the exercise. EEGs will be provided to the evaluators to assist in capturing the highlights of this exercise.

Exercise Planning

Exercise Planning Responsibilities. The Exercise Director is responsible for the following:

1. During exercise planning and design, ensuring all exercise documentation is coordinated thoroughly with all participating organizations.
2. During the exercise, supervising controller operations, including controller reporting.

Exercise Planning Team Responsibilities. To successfully fulfill exercise objectives, the exercise planning team will accomplish the following:

1. Fund selected activities to support the exercise, such as agency participation, facilities and logistics requirements.
2. Coordinate the exercise, administration, and technical planning input, including planning meetings conducted to ensure planning milestones are met.
3. Write, coordinate, and distribute the EXPLAN as well as changes and supplements thereto.
4. Develop, coordinate, and distribute an MSEL and supporting event implementers that will detail controller inputs for the exercise.
5. Develop an exercise briefing for presentation that will keep controllers, planners, and senior officials in participating agencies informed on the background and status of the exercise.
6. Schedule, coordinate, and conduct the Player Hot Wash shortly after the exercise.
7. Collect, consolidate, and coordinate exercise evaluation comments for inclusion in an AAR/IP that will include observations, lessons learned/best practices, and recommendations for improvement of response policies and procedures.
8. Provide videotape documentation of the exercise if desired.
9. Develop the necessary documentation for the conduct of the exercise.
10. Act as the central point of coordination for the participating planners.
11. Facilitate and provide input during the CE Debriefing following the exercise.

12. Conduct training for exercise players, controllers, and evaluators.

Public Affairs

The Special Needs/Adult Care Facility tabletop exercise offers participants the opportunity to demonstrate an increased readiness to deal with emergency incidents. Any public safety exercise may be a newsworthy event. Special attention must be given to the needs of the news media, allowing them to get as complete and accurate a story as possible, but ensuring their activities do not impact the realism of the exercise or compromise safety or the exercise objectives.

The North Central Region is responsible for disseminating public information in advance of the exercise, and will coordinate this function. Media personnel will be treated as observers and will follow observer guidelines. Media personnel will only enter the exercise play area with assigned escorts.

Part 2. Exercise Participation

Exercise Participants

Players. Players are facility/agency personnel who have an active role in responding to such an emergency by performing their regular roles and responsibilities during exercise play. Players initiate actions that will control and mitigate the simulated emergency.

Controllers. Controllers are exercise participants who plan and manage the exercise play; setup and operate the exercise incident site; and act in the roles of response individuals and agencies not actually playing in the exercise. Controllers provide key data to players and may prompt or initiate certain player actions to ensure exercise continuity. *Controllers are the only participants who will provide information or direction to the players.* Controllers may employ compressed time to ensure exercise continuity and completion. All controllers will be accountable to the Exercise Director. A controller may also serve as an evaluator.

Evaluators. Evaluators are chosen from various agencies to evaluate and comment on designated functional areas of the exercise. Evaluators are chosen based on their expertise in the functional area(s) they review during the exercise. Evaluators have a passive role in the exercise and only note the actions of players; they do not interfere with the flow of the exercise.

Observers. Observers view all or selected portions of exercise play. Observers do not participate in exercise play or in exercise control functions.

Participating Organizations	
Facility/Facilities	
Local Government Agencies	

State Government Agencies	
Regional Organizations	
Federal Government Agencies	
Voluntary Agencies	
Other	

Player/Responder Rules of Conduct

1. If an actual emergency occurs during the exercise, controllers will immediately suspend exercise play and evaluate the situation. The Exercise Director will then decide if the exercise can be safely resumed.
2. Players will not have prior knowledge of the scenario. If a player gains knowledge of the scenario before the exercise, an exercise controller should be notified so appropriate actions can be taken to ensure a valid evaluation.
3. Act in a professional manner at all times.
4. Understand the scope of the exercise. If players are unsure about a certain organization or agency’s participation in the exercise, a controller should be notified to clarify the situation.
5. If parts of the scenario seem implausible, do not complain. Recognize that the exercise has objectives that must be satisfied and may require doing things that may not be as realistic as we would like.
6. Do not engage in casual conversations with the controllers. When given a question, players should give a short, concise answer. If players are busy and cannot immediately respond, they should report back with an answer at the earliest possible time.
7. Do not engage in conversations with evaluators.

8. Maintain a log of actions, when possible. Many times, this log may include documentation of activities missed by a controller or evaluator.
9. Respond to exercise events and information as if the emergency were real.
10. Act as if simulated hazardous conditions are real. Adhere to all usual industrial/health protection controls for the simulated hazard(s) presented by the exercise scenario.
11. Controllers will only give players information they are specifically designated to disseminate from their assigned functional area. Players are expected to obtain other necessary information through existing emergency information channels.
12. Precede and follow all radio/telephone exercise messages and communications, where applicable, with the phrase, *“This is an Exercise.”*
13. In some cases, it may be necessary to exercise controller prerogative of countermanding player actions to preserve the continuity and objectives of the exercise. Players must accept the controller’s word as final and proceed with play.

Part 3. Operations

General

The Special Needs/Adult Care Facility tabletop exercise is a limited duration exercise of not more than four hours. The actions of participating agencies will be in response to events outlined in the Master Scenario Events List (MSEL). The MSEL is limited in scope, serving as a catalyst for initial actions and as a list of projected operational milestones. The MSEL allows the exercise control staff to ensure the exercise stays on track and objectives are met. The Exercise Director and controllers may identify additional actions or adjustments required during the exercise to guide play to ensure these objectives are met.

Briefings and Events

Controller and Evaluator Orientation Briefing. A comprehensive Controller/Evaluator (CE) Briefing will be conducted the day before the exercise. Each controller and evaluator is required to attend this session, plus any specialized training required, to learn all assigned responsibilities. This is also the time for controllers and evaluators to get acquainted and address in advance any issues that might arise during the exercise.

Exercise Play. Following introduction of the exercise scenario, play will proceed as per the MSEL and in accordance with established plans and procedures of player/responder agencies. The exercise will conclude at the direction of the Exercise Director and on the substantial completion of operations and attainment of the exercise objectives. A Player Hot Wash for exercise participants will take place immediately after the exercise. A debriefing for controllers and evaluators will occur the following day. The exercise schedule is included as an appendix to this EXPLAN. The following are some exercise guidelines:

1. Controllers and evaluators will check-in one hour prior to the start of the exercise.

2. Exercise play will not be halted for player breaks or, where occurring, shift changes.

Player Hot Wash. This block of time is provided immediately following each exercise to gather the first impressions of participants about exercise conduct and play. Observers are not encouraged to attend, unless by specific invitation of exercise officials. Controllers and evaluators are encouraged to attend because they may find the information useful for the completion of controller notes and evaluation forms.

Controller, Evaluator, and Senior Agency Official Debriefing. This debriefing is a forum for representatives to review the exercise, build an overall timeline of events, and coordinate to complete a draft version of the After Action Report and Improvement Plan (AAR/IP). It will be a facilitated discussion covering each functional area and the exercise process. Breakout sessions by functional groups will follow the facilitated discussion in order to build a timeline of events and initiate development of the AAR/IP.

Safety

All participating organizations recognize the importance of conducting an exercise activity as safely as possible.

Exercise Controllers. All exercise controllers will serve as safety observers during the exercise.

Exercise Safety Requirements (General). Participant safety takes priority over exercise events. Although the organizations involved with the exercise come from various agencies, they share the basic concept of ensuring a safe and healthful workplace for their personnel. In addition, aspects of emergency response are dangerous. Professional health and safety ethics should guide all participants to operate in their assigned roles in the safest manner possible. The following general requirements apply to the exercise:

1. All exercise controllers will serve as safety observers while exercise activities are under way.
2. It is the responsibility of every person associated with the exercise to stop play if, in his or her opinion, a real safety problem exists. Once the problem is corrected, exercise play can then be restarted.
3. All organizations will comply with their respective environmental, health, and safety plans and procedures, as well as all appropriate Federal, State, and local environmental health and safety regulations.

Accident Reporting. All injuries, incidents, and accidents, regardless of severity, will be reported immediately to the nearest controller. Anyone observing a participant who is seriously ill or injured will first advise the nearest controller and then render first aid, if possible, provided the aid given does not exceed his or her training.

Alcohol. Alcohol consumption will not be allowed during the exercise. If a controller detects the presence of alcohol on a participant or if a participant is believed to be under the influence, the controller will remove the participant from the exercise and report the participant to his or her

supervisor for appropriate follow-on action.

Prescription Medication. Participants taking prescription medication will report this information through their chain of command. Supervisors should inform the exercise safety controller of the decision to allow such an individual to participate.

Illegal Drugs. The use of illegal drugs is prohibited. If a controller detects the presence of drugs on a participant or if a participant is believed to be under the influence, the controller will remove the participant from the exercise and report the participant to his or her supervisor for appropriate follow-on action.

Part 4. Logistics

General

This section specifies tasks to support exercise preparation, conduct, and/or evaluation. This plan includes notification of controllers, obtainment of briefing rooms/classrooms, communications requirements, meals, transportation, and facility security access.

Parking and Transportation. Controllers and evaluators will be responsible for transportation coordination to their respective exercise locations. Parking will be available.

Lunch. Food and refreshments will be available for the convenience of all exercise personnel.

Restroom Facilities. Restroom facilities will be located onsite for use during the exercise.

Cleanup and Restoration. Following the exercise, controllers, evaluators, and players will begin cleanup operations to restore the area to pre-exercise conditions. All agencies assist in these efforts.

Recording and Documenting Activities. Media camera crews or still photographers may be operating throughout the exercise. All participants should be advised of their presence and instructed to cooperate fully.

Security and Access

General. Only authorized personnel will be permitted access into the exercise play areas. The site security team will be responsible for maintaining the integrity of the exercise site and any other security requirements that may arise during preparation or conduct of the exercise. This is an *unclassified* exercise; however, participants must take appropriate security measures to safeguard information and material they deem sensitive throughout the exercise.

Responsibilities. The Exercise Director and exercise planning team are responsible for establishing policies, concepts, and standards for the exercise. Each participating organization should follow its internal security procedures, augmented as necessary, in order to comply with exercise requirements.

Visitor Coordination. Each organization with observers/visitors should coordinate with the

Exercise Director or a controller for access to the exercise site. Each participating organization is requested to provide observers' names, titles and organization affiliation in order to expedite the smooth reception and escort of visitors to the exercise area.

Observers will be escorted to the observation area for orientation and conduct of the exercise.

Media personnel will view the exercise from a designated area. Media will be asked to remain within the designated observation area during the exercise. Representatives from North Central Region will be available to explain the exercise and answer questions for the media during the exercise.

Identification. Distinctive hats and badges may be issued to exercise staff (controllers and evaluators) to ensure exercise identification.

Exercise Communications

IMPORTANT: If radios and/or telephones are used during exercise play, all spoken and written communications will start and end with the statement, *"This is an Exercise."*

Player Communications. Player will use face-to-face communications during the exercise or, when radios and/or telephones are used, only routine, in-place agency communications systems. Additional communication assets may be made available as the exercise progresses. The need to maintain a response capability for real-world response may preclude the use of all communications channels or systems that would usually be available for an actual incident. Exercise communications will NOT interfere with real-world emergency communications.

Controller Communications. The principal method of communications for controllers during the exercise will be face-to-face communications. Exercise controllers may have access to a cellular and/or landline phone that will enable them to communicate control information to other exercise controllers. In no case should controller communications interfere with, or override, player communications.

Appendices

NOTE: *The appendices included in each exercise document will vary depending on the specific requirements of the exercise and the preferences of the exercise planners. It is strongly recommended that the following appendices accompany this document: (a) acronym list, (b) exercise schedule, (c) facility and/or jurisdiction fact sheet, and (d) maps.*

These appendices can be found online in HSEEP Volume IV Library (hseep.dhs.gov).