

**[STATE] HOMELAND  
SECURITY EXERCISE  
AND EVALUATION  
PROGRAM**

**Multiyear  
Exercise Plan**

## **Points of Contact**

### **Sponsor Agency POC**

[Contact Information]

### **Exercise POC**

[Contact Information]

## [State] Multiyear Exercise Plan

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### FOREWORD

This Multiyear Exercise Plan is being disseminated on behalf of [State] and [Sponsor Agency] to help jurisdictions assess their capacity to prevent or respond to, and recover from, a disaster so that jurisdictions can make modifications or improvements prior to the occurrence of a real incident. The Plan will coordinate all exercise activities occurring throughout the State.

**NOTE:** *This “FOREWORD” section should contain State-specific information. First, it should identify the background and rationale for building the State exercise program and documenting the Multiyear Exercise Plan. Then, it should identify Plan inputs such as:*

- *Contributions of participating jurisdictions, agencies, organizations, including their products, goals, objectives, and capabilities*
- *State Homeland Security Strategy*
- *Previous and/or current exercise program plan*

This Multiyear Plan is consistent with the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP). It endorses a threat- and performance-based exercise program that includes a cycle, mix, and range of exercise activities of varying degrees of complexity and interaction.

**Homeland security is a concerted national effort 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. – National Strategy for Homeland Security**

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[State]  
**Multiyear Exercise Plan**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

[State] possesses critical infrastructure and key assets of national, social, and economic interest, which may serve as potential terrorist targets. Its geographic location, diverse topography, and wide-spread population centers do not guarantee that these potential targets will be immune from terrorist attacks. Moreover, it is important to recognize another reality – as our nation improves its homeland security and targets become more difficult to attack, terrorists could look to targets that are less protected. For this reason, [State] has many challenges in providing response capabilities across the State. However, the State has a number of resources, capabilities, and authorities that can be used to aid in preventing acts of terrorism, as well as responding to, and recovering from, acts of terrorism.

The [Sponsor Agency] was created under an emergency Executive Order issued by Governor [Name] on [Date], in response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. These unexpected terrorist attacks, which were heretofore considered highly improbable, identified a critical need to bring focus and structure to terrorism prevention and preparedness planning within [State]. The [Sponsor Agency] was also created in anticipation of supporting national counterterrorism activities and programs such as those now sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

[State]'s [Sponsor Agency] serves as the central point for inter-/intra-agency information review, analysis, and distribution; and acts as the liaison between Federal, State, and local agencies to effect the improved sharing of counterterrorism intelligence. It is also responsible for establishing security standards for state facilities and for protection of their occupants. Working with the existing emergency response and emergency management programs, [Sponsor Agency] provides assistance in developing and conducting terrorism response exercises for emergency responders, government officials, healthcare providers, and others, as well as planning, training, exercising, response, and equipment resources to all of [State]'s jurisdictions.

A concerted national effort ... is based on the principles of shared responsibility and partnership with the Congress, state and local governments, the private sector, and the American people - *The National Strategy for Homeland Security*

[State] has grouped local authorities and resources into geographical and functional planning areas. In order to assure statewide coordination and consistency, there is a core team of state-level coordinators, which includes the [State] State Patrol District Commander, the [Sponsor Agency] Regional Planner, a Federal Bureau of Investigation Agent-in-Charge, and a Regional Public Health Planner.

This Multiyear Exercise Plan will serve as an important resource for terrorism planning and response authorities throughout [State]. It provides a multiyear strategy with exercise goals, a state-wide methodology, a summary of the exercises available, and guidelines that provide a

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framework for developing each desired exercise. This plan also includes an exercise execution work plan and timeline that will preliminarily schedule [State]'s HSEEP administered exercises for the next three years, based on the State's needs and capabilities. This plan will be managed at the state level and implemented at the regional level.

The *National Strategy for Homeland Security* characterizes terrorism as any premeditated, unlawful act dangerous to human life or public welfare that is intended to intimidate or coerce civilian populations or governments. This description covers kidnappings; hijackings; shootings; conventional bombings; attacks involving chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear weapons; cyber attacks; and any number of other forms of malicious violence. Terrorists can be U.S. citizens or foreigners, acting in concert with others, on their own, or on behalf of a hostile state.

## II. CURRENT [STATE] HOMELAND SECURITY EFFORTS

In order for [State]'s Multiyear Exercise Plan to be effective, a baseline assessment on the status of statewide homeland security efforts is required to appropriately assess current needs and select exercise options. This assessment, to be conducted on [Date] will be structured around [State]'s [Designated Security Region(s)], while also accounting for support provided by the State. This assessment should provide the information necessary to design exercise solutions to the individual needs of the regions or jurisdictions in which they are staged.

This Multiyear Exercise Plan has been prepared as the first step in the planning process, and will serve as the initial planning document used to begin development of [State]'s HSEEP. [State]'s Multiyear Exercise Plan will be based on the results of the assessment, as well as statewide and regional objectives that will support the exercise methodology. [State] also plans to conduct additional workshops to help define the current State Homeland Security status, refine State-level exercise goals, and finalize the multiyear exercise timeline.

The [State] Multiyear Exercise Plan will address the exercise needs of each jurisdiction and designated agencies/organizations. Exercises identified in the plan will complement existing plans, equipment, resource allocations, and training. These exercises will provide an opportunity to evaluate community preparedness levels and identify improvement opportunities.

## III. EXERCISE PLAN GOALS

Exercise Plan Goals offer a clear understanding to all personnel participating in the exercise program of desired levels of capabilities and accomplishment, while maintaining focus and direction during the statewide effort. The goals are based on current status analysis, identified areas of strength and areas of improvement. The goals provide a clear understanding of [State]'s approach to strengthening domestic preparedness, as well as an opportunity for measured success throughout the program.

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The National Strategy for Homeland Security has created a foundation on which to organize domestic preparedness efforts and programs. The three strategic objectives identified to accomplish this goal are, in order of priority, to prevent terrorist attacks within the United States, to reduce America's vulnerability to terrorism, and to minimize the damage and recover from attacks that do occur. [State] will directly integrate its efforts within the national homeland security community by adopting similar overarching goals for the State, and outlining more refined objectives to focus domestic preparedness activities to best realize measured improvements in preparedness. Additionally, by participating in the national framework approach, [State] will be able to maximize opportunities to share best practices and lessons learned with communities of interest throughout the United States.

The [State] Strategy for Homeland Security and the [State] Multiyear Exercise Plan have focused on three overarching goals. They are:

- Prevent acts of terrorism within [State] and the region.
- Reduce [State]'s vulnerability to terrorism.
- Minimize the damage and recovery from attacks that do occur.

To achieve goals, [State] has established the following objectives:

### **Prevention:**

- Incorporate the State Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) in all full-scale exercises (FSE) to test plans and procedures.
- Incorporate local, State, Federal, and neighboring State organizations into exercise planning, conduct, and evaluation as appropriate.

### **Reduce Vulnerability:**

- Hire a State-employed full-time limited duration position (that will utilize contractor staff if the contractor is hired) to manage and implement the [State] Multiyear Exercise Plan.
- Assist in the development, conduct, and/or evaluation of at least 36 WMD-related exercises over a period of three years, to include one annual State-evaluated exercise in each of the three years.
- Incorporate the State Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) in all FSEs to test plans and procedures.

### **Minimize Damage/Recover:**

- Assist in the development, conduct, and/or evaluation of at least 36 WMD exercises over a period of three years, to include one annual State-evaluated exercise in each of the three years.
- Incorporate the State ECC in all FSEs to test plans and procedures.

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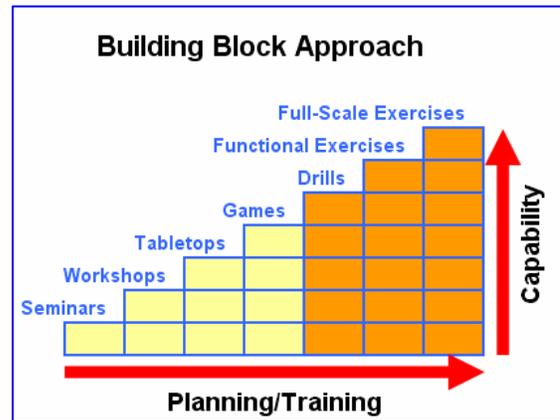
- Incorporate local, State, Federal, and neighboring State organizations into exercise planning, conduct, and evaluation as appropriate.

### IV. EXERCISE METHODOLOGY

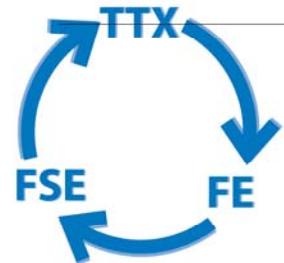
#### Building-Block Approach

[State]'s jurisdictions possess different levels of preparedness regarding terrorism prevention, response, and recovery capabilities. Because of these differences, the [State] Exercise Plan utilizes a building-block approach in the design of the overall exercise program.

The building-block approach ensures successful progression in exercise design, complexity, and execution, and allows for the appropriate training and preparation to occur in the community receiving the exercise. Using this methodology, [State] can ensure that the levels of exercise scope, scale, and complexity are tailored to each specific region or jurisdiction within the State, while maintaining a consistent statewide delivery method.



Upon completion of the upcoming state-wide assessment, an exercise baseline will be established for each jurisdiction. Development of the baseline will reflect the current status of plans, policies and procedures, as well as equipment and training. In addition, the exercise baseline will take into account the relevant agencies' and organizations' history and experience working together, both in previous exercises and real-world events. Determining the appropriate exercise baseline is essential to the development of a successful exercise program. Using the building block approach and the cycle of complexity enhances the likelihood for success. The program allows for a logical progression of regional and jurisdictional preparedness by increasing the size, complexity, and stress factor over time, while allowing for significant learning opportunities that complement, build upon, and directly lead into one another effectively. This model remains flexible enough to allow for the addition, or inclusion, of other desired exercise types that the State or jurisdictions may require. The initiating act(s) of terrorism may vary in the statewide exercise process, and as the timeline moves forward, exercises can be developed to reflect increased levels of complexity to more fully understand the elements involved in prevention, response, and recovery. Finally, this exercise model allows for a cyclical approach to statewide exercises, and a sustainable program for achieving higher degrees of overall preparedness for acts of terrorism.



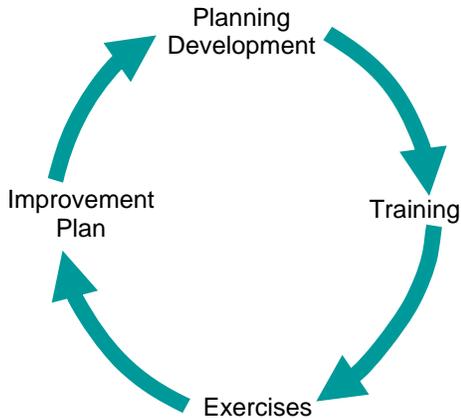
The State and its [Designated Security Region(s)] will utilize a cyclical approach to exercise development. Exercises cannot and should not exist in a vacuum. They should be integrated into an overall preparedness program. On an annual basis the program follows the cycle of:

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- Planning/Development
- Training/Preparation
- Exercises
- Improvement Plan

### 1 Year Cycle



Additionally, [State] will conduct annual terrorism exercises that can be coordinated with some or all jurisdictions, and/or in conjunction with other states or Federal agencies. [State]'s three-year approach will focus efforts in specific areas, reflecting the findings from the upcoming threat and vulnerability analysis. Exercises will be designed and scheduled following the building block approach, with each exercise increasing in scope, scale and complexity. Since each jurisdiction will differ with respect to threat level and capabilities, each jurisdiction will have its own starting point in the three-year cycle. Appendix A summarizes the scope and complexity of each type of exercise.

The current schedule of exercises is reflected in the following section (Section V).









## VI. PROGRAM MAINTENANCE AND EVALUATION

Carrying out a successful terrorism exercise program requires that all jurisdictions throughout the State participate in exercises and support the statewide goals and preparedness mission. Exercise program maintenance depends on finding ways of making the program sustainable. The overall exercise program will be unsuccessful if exercises are conducted independently of each other. They must be integrated into overall preparedness efforts and evaluation and improvement efforts should be built into planning, training, and exercising efforts to assure sustainability. [State] supports the nation's efforts to augment preparedness by establishing an exercise program that incorporates evaluation and improvement components into planning.

In order to get the maximum benefit out of an exercise, planners and evaluators must look at how participants implemented plans and made decisions in response to the event. This should focus on positive outcomes, as well as areas for improvement. The evaluation results should be viewed by the participating agencies and jurisdictions as an opportunity to identify ways to build on strengths and improve capacity. Because planning and conducting an exercise requires a significant commitment of resources, it is important to maximize the benefits gained from the exercise through the evaluation and improvement process.

The goal of exercise evaluation is to validate strengths and identify improvement opportunities for the participating organization(s). This is accomplished by: observing the exercise and collecting supporting data; analyzing the data to compare performance against expected outcomes; and determining what changes need to be made to the procedures, plans, staffing, equipment, organizations, and inter-agency coordination. The focus of the evaluation for tabletop and other discussion-based exercises is on plans, policies, and interagency/ inter-jurisdictional relationships, whereas the focus for operations-based exercises is on assessing performance in preventing or responding to a simulated attack.

### **Evaluation Components**

After Action Reports (AARs) and Improvement Plans (IPs) provide valuable input into strategy development and program planning at the State and Federal levels, as well as lessons learned that should be shared with other jurisdictions across the country to raise the preparedness of the nation. Therefore, DHS/ODP and [State] will require that copies of the AAR/IP for all exercises implemented with grant funds and/or DHS/ODP contractor support be forwarded to the State Administrative Agency (SAA) and to DHS/ODP.

**1.0 After Action Reports (AAR):** An AAR provides a description of what happened during the exercise, issues that need to be addressed, and recommendations for improvements. There are different methods for compiling information for the AAR, however all should contain certain key elements. Key elements include:

**1.1 Date, time, and place of exercise**

**1.2 Type of exercise** – (e.g., tabletop, functional, or full-scale)

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**1.3 Focus of the exercise** – Is it oriented toward prevention, response, or recovery from a terrorism event? What initiating event is being highlighted?

**1.4 Participants** - Who were the participants, how many were there, what agencies were involved, what type of responders or officials were involved in the play

**1.5 Objectives** – Exercises should be based on objectives exercise participants need to accomplish in order to improve preparedness as opposed to scenarios they want to play out. For example, if a community feels that evaluating notification systems between hospitals and EMS then emphasizing this response element should be incorporated into the scenario.

**1.6 Discussions or Observations with Corresponding Recommendations** – Discussions are those summarized by evaluators for a discussion-based exercise. Observations are those captured by evaluators for operations-based exercises. These discussions or observations should be broken down functionally (e.g., law enforcement, incident command, medical response, etc.) in the AAR and for each issue discussed or observed (e.g. gross decontamination, agent identification, surveillance procedures), there should be corresponding recommendations included that help discern lessons learned from the exercise.

**1.7 Lessons Learned** – Lessons learned are knowledge gained from an innovation or experiences that provide valuable evidence—positive or negative—recommending how to approach a similar problem in the future. Lessons learned are not just summaries of what went right or wrong, rather, they should provide insight into the situation to describe a change that was made to address a particular issue. More broadly, these lessons should be suitable to share with other jurisdictions across the State and the country in an effort to enhance preparedness. Although every finding and recommendation that comes out of the analysis process may result in lessons learned for the participating jurisdictions, it is those that may have applicability to other jurisdictions that should be highlighted as lessons learned in the AAR.

**1.8 Principle Findings or Significant Observations** - Principle findings are the most important issues discerned from a discussion based exercise. Significant observations are the most important observations recognized by one or more evaluators during an operations-based exercise. These generally cut across functional disciplines or are areas within a function that are found to be extremely important for elevating preparedness in a community, region, or the State overall. These often directly tie back to the objectives for the exercise.

**2.0 Improvement Plans (IPs):** As mentioned above, the AAR will provide a picture of the response with the exercise participants and community leaders so that everyone can understand what was planned to happen, what actually happened during the exercise, why it happened, and what could have been done differently to improve performance. Generally, the initial IP will be included in the final AAR.

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The IP is the means by which the lessons learned from the exercise are turned into concrete, measurable steps that result in improved response capabilities. It will be developed by the local jurisdiction. When complete, it specifically details what actions will be taken to address each recommendation presented in the draft AAR, who or what agency(s) will be responsible for taking the action, and the timeline for completion.

The IP should be realistic and should establish priorities for the use of limited resources. Every effort should be made to address recommendations related to performance of critical tasks. Other recommendations should also be addressed, as appropriate. When the availability of resources may not be immediate, short-term and long-term solutions should be discussed. For example, if one of the recommendations identified the need to improve communications among the various city agencies and the jurisdiction determines that new equipment is needed. However, they are not likely to receive needed funds from the jurisdiction or to be a high priority for funding from the State this year. Therefore, the IP should indicate that the emergency management agency will request funds to purchase new equipment and will also implement interim measures to improve communication in the short term, such as providing cell phones to essential personnel. In this fashion IPs can serve as the basis for future State Assessments.

**NOTE:** More detailed templates and tools for capturing exercise evaluation information are available in *HSEEP Volume II: Exercise Evaluation and Improvement*.

### Sharing Lessons Learned

The goals and benefits of sharing the AAR/IP are several:

- The AAR/IP should be shared with officials from the agencies that participated in the exercise. For local jurisdictions the IP will provide a workable and systematic process to initiate and document improvements to plans, policies, and procedures and to identify and secure needed training, equipment and other resources. It is developed by local officials to address local needs.
- For [State] and the [State Agency], the AAR/IPs provide a method for collecting information about corrective actions from local governments and state agencies so the needs identified can be integrated into statewide strategy process and resource allocation plans.
- For DHS/ODP, the AAR/IPs provide needed information for program planning, to direct resources, and to assess levels of preparedness. This information will also enable DHS/ODP to provide Congress with accurate information on HSEEP performance as executed by federal, state, and local agencies and a basis for integrating HSEEP initiatives with other programs in DHS/ODP and other departments. The AAR/IPs also provide information that can inform the development and refinement of performance standards and recommended practices and enhance federally-sponsored training programs.

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DHS/ODP will provide information on best practices and lessons-learned to the Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT), who is charged with maintaining a national repository for this information. MIPT will make this information available to first responders and emergency planners nationwide via Ready-Net, a secure, Web-based information network. Access to Ready-Net is restricted to approved users within the response community through the DHS/ODP Secure Portal. The MIPT Ready-Net is funded by DHS/ODP.

**3.0 Exercise Plan Review:** On an annual basis, the funding agency will meet with [State] state exercise planners and review the Multiyear plan. The primary purpose of this review is to ensure that the goals and objectives of the plan are meeting the current needs of the state and its jurisdictions. Any required changes to the plan (this document) will be made at this time.

Beyond an annual review, the state and/or its jurisdictions will conduct periodic reviews of the exercise schedule. Numerous factors can impact a projected exercise schedule and changes to the schedule are expected. In order to minimize reporting requirements on the state, updates to the exercise schedule will coincide with the *Program Progress Reports*.

### **VII. SUMMARY**

[State] is moving forward with considerable effort to better protect and prepare its citizens against the threat of terrorism. The development of the [State] Multiyear Exercise Plan enables [State] to serve as a nationwide model for domestic preparedness by providing comprehensive preparedness initiatives throughout the State. The Multiyear Exercise Plan was developed in accordance with standards and guidance set forth in HSEEP and will serve [State] in all exercises for the next three years.

**APPENDIX A  
EXERCISE TYPES<sup>1</sup>**

Following are descriptions of the various exercise types provided in HSEEP Volume I: Overview and Doctrine.

**Seminars**

Seminars are generally employed to orient participants to, or provide an overview of, authorities, strategies, plans, policies, procedures, protocols, response resources, or concepts and ideas. Seminars provide a good starting point for jurisdictions that are developing or making major changes to their plans and procedures. They offer the following attributes:

- Low-stress environment employing a number of instruction techniques, such as lectures, multimedia presentations, panel discussions, case study discussions, expert testimony, and decision support tools
- Informal discussions led by a seminar leader
- Atmosphere that is not constrained by real-time portrayal of events
- Effectiveness with both small and large groups

**Workshops**

Workshops usually focus on development of a product by the attendees. Organization of attendees into functional groups, aided by facilitators and the use of breakout sessions, are common. Final results are often presented and approved in a plenary session. In conjunction with exercise development, workshops are most useful in planning specific aspects of exercise design, such as:

- Determining program or exercise objectives
- Developing exercise scenario and key events listings
- Determining evaluation elements and standards of performance

**Drills**

A drill 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 in the use of new equipment, to develop or test new policies or procedures, or to practice and maintain current skills. Typical attributes include:

- A narrow focus, measured against established standards
- Instant feedback
- Realistic environment
- Performance in isolation
- Performance as a subset of full-scale exercises (FSEs)

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<sup>1</sup> *Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program, Volume 1: Overview and Doctrine*, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Office for Domestic Preparedness, January 2003.

### **Games**

A game is a simulation of operations that often involves two or more teams, usually in a competitive environment, using rules, data, and procedures designed to depict an actual or assumed real-life situation. It does not involve the use of actual resources, but the sequence of events affects, and is in turn affected by, the decisions made by the players.

Players are commonly presented with scenarios and asked to perform a task associated with the scenario episode. Each episode then moves to the next level of detail or complexity, taking into account the players' earlier decisions. The decisions made by game participants determine the flow of the game. The goal is to explore decision-making processes and the consequences of decisions. In a game, the same situation can be examined from different perspectives by changing variables and parameters that guide player actions. Large-scale games are multi-jurisdictional and can include active participation from local to national levels of government. Games stress the importance of the planners' and players' understanding and comprehension of interrelated processes.

With the evolving complexity and sophistication of current simulations, there are increased opportunities to provide enhanced realism for game participants. The use of computer-generated scenarios and simulations can provide a more realistic and time-sensitive method of introducing situations for analysis. Planner decisions can be input and models run to show the effect of decisions made during a game. Games are excellent vehicles for the following:

- Gaining policy or process consensus
- Conducting "what-if" analyses of existing plans
- Developing new plans

### **Tabletop Exercises**

Tabletop exercises (TTXs) involve senior staff, elected or appointed officials, or other key staff in an informal setting to discuss simulated situations. This type of exercise is intended to stimulate discussion of various issues regarding a hypothetical situation. It can be used to assess plans, policies, and procedures, or to assess the types of systems needed to guide the prevention of, response to, and recovery from the defined event. TTXs are typically aimed at facilitating the 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 rapid, spontaneous decision making that occurs under actual or simulated emergency conditions. In contrast to the scale and cost of exercises and games, TTXs can be a cost-effective tool when used in conjunction with more complex exercises. The TTX's effectiveness is derived from the energetic involvement of participants and their assessment of recommended revisions to current policies, procedures, and plans.

There are two categories of TTXs: basic and advanced. In a basic TTX, the scene set by the scenario materials remains constant. The scene describes an event or emergency incident, and brings 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 resolution is generally agreed upon, then summarized by the leader. In an advanced TTX, play

revolves around delivery of prescribed messages to players that alter the original scenario. The exercise controller (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 problem, using appropriate plans and procedures. Activities in a TTX may include:

- Practicing group problem solving
- Familiarizing senior officials
- Conducting a specific case study
- Examining personnel contingencies
- Testing group message interpretation
- Participating in information sharing
- Assessing interagency coordination
- Achieving limited or specific objectives

### **Functional Exercises**

The functional exercise (FE) is designed to test and evaluate individual capabilities, multiple functions or activities within a function, or interdependent groups of functions. It is generally focused on exercising the plans, policies, procedures, and staffs of the direction and control nodes of Incident Command and Unified Command. Events are usually projected through an exercise scenario, with event updates that drive activity at the management level. The movement of equipment and personnel is simulated.

The objective of the FE is to execute specific plans and procedures and apply established policies, plans, and procedures under crisis conditions, within a particular function or by a specific team. The 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 environment. Activities in an FE include:

- Evaluating functions
- Evaluating EOCs, headquarters, and staff
- Reinforcing established policies and procedures
- Measuring the adequacy of resources
- Examining inter-jurisdictional relationships

### **Full-Scale Exercises**

In a full-scale exercise (FSE), response elements are required to mobilize and deploy to a designated site or locate in response to a simulated attack, generally for an extended period. Actual mobilization and movement of personnel and resources are required to demonstrate coordination and response capability. EOCs and field command posts are activated. The FSE is the largest, costliest, and most complex exercise type and may involve participation at the State, local, regional, and Federal levels. Although prescribed events may be used, the exercise is primarily driven by player actions and decisions.

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The FSE is used to evaluate the operational capabilities of systems, functional interfacing, and interaction during an extended period. It involves testing a major portion of operations plans and overall organization under field conditions. Activities in an FSE may include:

- Assessing organizational or individual performance
- Demonstrating interagency cooperation
- Allocating resources and personnel
- Assessing equipment capabilities
- Activating personnel and equipment locations
- Assessing inter-jurisdictional cooperation
- Exercising public information systems
- Testing communications systems and procedures
- Analyzing memoranda of understanding (MOUs), standard operating procedures (SOPs), plans, policies, and procedures