

Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program

HSSEP In Action

JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA'S PRE-EXERCISE TRAINING

HSEEP guidance recommends that exercise managers conduct pre-exercise briefings to educate participants, controllers, and evaluators about their roles and responsibilities. The Jacksonville, Florida, Region 3 Domestic Security Task Force Interoperable Communications Committee held a full-day training session for its Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) prior to its TICP full-scale exercise (FSE).

In 2006, the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Grants and Training required 76 Urban Area Security Initiative-designated urban areas and other state-designated metropolitan areas to test their TICPs with FSEs. Florida's State Working Group Interoperable Communications Chair had evaluated several TICP exercises before planning began for Jacksonville, Florida's TICP exercise. He discovered that many exercise participants were unfamiliar with TICP terminology and with their TICP responsibilities. Jacksonville exercise managers realized they needed a way to educate exercise players about their TICP responsibilities prior to the FSE.

HSEEP guidance recommends that exercise managers conduct pre-exercise briefings to educate participants, controllers, and evaluators about their roles and responsibilities. Before the exercise, the planning team provided all of the exercise evaluators with specific instructions on how to relate each Exercise Evaluation Guide to the target objectives and how to conduct an objective assessment of specific focus areas.

The Florida Region 3 Domestic Security Task Force Interoperable Communications Committee also invited all exercise participants and other agencies throughout the region to attend a full-day TICP training session, held approximately two weeks before the FSE. A total of 75 representatives from communications, emergency management, emergency medical services, fire, and law enforcement agencies attended the training. Interoperable Communications Technical Assistance Program (ICTAP) trainers, in coordination with Florida Region 3 managers, provided briefings to the exercise players on the Jacksonville TICP. The ICTAP trainers described how exercise players' routine, daily operations related to the Jacksonville TICP. Finally, exercise participants were presented with simple scenarios and had to employ the TICP to resolve them.

The day-long familiarization training allowed all the exercise participants the opportunity to learn their respective roles within the TICP framework, including how to alter their routine operations in the event that the TICP is activated. One exercise evaluator noted that Jacksonville players were much more familiar with their roles and responsibilities during the FSE than players at other locations who had not received pre-exercise TICP training.



**Jacksonville International Airport,
one of the exercise venues**