



Western Australia Managing Exercises Guideline

STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

A Strategic Framework for Emergency
Management in Western Australia.

RESPONSIBLE AGENCY

State Emergency Management
Committee Business Unit

APPROVED BY

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Management Committee

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Amendment Table

No.	Date	Details	Amended by
1	May 2020	Version V01.00 - Initial issue of Western Australian Managing Exercises Guideline.	SEMC Business Unit
2	June 2021	Version 2.00 - Amendments approved by SEMC (Resolution Number 32/2021) as per State EM documents amendments table May 2021 .	SEMC Business Unit
3	December 2022	Version 2.01 - Amendments approved by SEMC Executive Officer (Resolution Number 17/2021). Statement of fact changes and updated hyperlinks to new SEMC website as per amendments table December 2022 .	SEMC Business Unit
4	October 2023	Version 2.02 - Consequential amendments to reflect the change to SEMC Emergency Management Capability Framework terminology (resolution number 83/2023) and statement of fact and accessibility amendments approved by the SEMC Executive Officer as outlined in State EM documents amendments table October 2023 .	SEMC Business Unit

The SEMC acknowledges the Aboriginal peoples throughout the state of Western Australia as the Traditional Custodians of the lands where we live, work and volunteer. We recognise Aboriginal peoples' continued connection to land, waters and community, and pay our respects to Elders both past and present.

This document was designed to be viewed electronically and aims to meet the West Australian Government's web accessibility requirements, including meeting the World Wide Web Consortium's Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 (WCAG 2.1) at level AA. If anything in this document is inaccessible to you, or you are experiencing problems accessing content for any reason, please contact the State Emergency Management Committee Business Unit at semc.policylegislation@dfes.wa.gov.au.

All of the State emergency management legislation and documents can be accessed via the [State Emergency Management Framework](#) page of the State Emergency Management Committee website.

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Introduction

About this Guideline

This guideline was developed by the State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) Business Unit and endorsed by the State Exercise Coordination Team (SECT) with an aim of assisting emergency management agencies, public authorities and local governments within Western Australia to run exercises to prepare for an emergency. This guideline:

- provides a simple overview of the exercise management process;
- provides a step-by-step guide through the phases of exercise management;
- can be used for single agency, multi-agency or whole-of-government exercises;
- has been designed to support small exercises, while also providing more comprehensive information for larger or more complex exercises; and
- includes useful templates and resources.

This document is to be read in conjunction with the following suite of State emergency management documents:

- State Emergency Management Policy (State EM Policy);
- State Emergency Management Plan (State EM Plan);
- State Emergency Management Procedures (State EM Procedures); and
- State Emergency Management Glossary (State EM Glossary).

Who is this Guideline For?

This guideline is aimed at:

- Managers running a small exercise – perhaps for the first time;
- Members of an exercise planning team for large exercises;
- Exercise Directors or other senior managers who have exercise management responsibilities;
- Anyone with an interest in exercise management within the emergency management sector in the Western Australian.

How to use this Guideline

This guideline is broken into the four phases of exercise management:

- Phase 1 - Concept
- Phase 2 - Plan
- Phase 3 - Conduct
- Phase 4 - Evaluate

Templates

Each phase of the guideline includes useful templates and resources to help guide the user to effectively run their exercises.



Look for this symbol throughout this guideline to identify where a template is provided. Editable versions of this templates are available in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#). For additional information on using these resources, please contact the SECT at SECT@dfes.wa.gov.au.

Acknowledgements

This guideline is based on *Managing Exercises: A Handbook for Tasmanian Government Agencies* developed by the Tasmanian Government in consultation with a steering committee comprising of emergency services personnel and representatives from relevant Tasmanian Government agencies. The Tasmanian Government has permitted for the original handbook to be reproduced and adapted for use in Western Australia.

The Western Australian Government acknowledges:

- the work done by the Tasmanian State Emergency Services and the Tasmanian Government in the development of this guideline and making it available to Western Australia;
- the work done by the Australian Government Attorney General's Department in consultation with emergency management professionals and subject matter experts;
- the work undertaken by the United States Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Preparedness Directorate as part of the Department of Homeland Security;
- the Australia-New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee whose processes this guideline is based on and intended to complement.

For more information about the exercise management principles outlined in this guideline, please refer to:

- Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) *Managing Exercises Handbook 3* from the Australian Disaster Resilience Handbook Collection;
- Australia–New Zealand Counter-Terrorism Committee, *Exercise Management and Exercise Evaluation Course notes*, February 2015;
- Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program, series of manuals (US Federal Emergency Management Agency);
- National Directorate for Fire and Emergency Management, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, *Guidance Document 4, A Guide to Planning and Staging Exercises*, May 2011.



Background

Exercises are an essential component of preparedness and should be used to enhance capability and contribute to continuous improvement. Current best practice research into emergency management exercising prescribes that an effective exercise management program needs to adhere to a number of key principals.

These include:

- Strategic guidance from senior management and government - Early and frequent engagement of senior management and government in exercising is the key to the success of any exercise program. The basic premise is that senior managers should provide overarching strategic guidance or direction for the cycle of exercise products and overall preparedness effort. Senior managers and government should identify their greatest threats and weakest capabilities to define their relevant exercise needs.
- Exercises need to be capability-based and objective driven - Using a capability-based exercise model that will focus on assessing performance against capability-based objectives, will allow organisations to use exercises to more accurately examine current and required core capabilities, which in turn, will identify any gaps in capability that need to be validated through exercising.
- Exercises should utilise a progressive planning approach - A progressive planning approach includes the use of various types of exercises aligned to a common set of exercise program priorities and objectives within a cycle of exercises. These exercises should increase in their level of complexity over time.
- Local government and community integration - Where appropriate, local governments should be engaged and encouraged to participate and contribute to exercise program management, its design and development, conduct, evaluation and improvement planning.
- Exercises should be informed by risk - Identifying and assessing risks and their associated impacts helps emergency management and support agencies identify priorities, objectives and core capabilities to be evaluated through exercises.

What is an Exercise?

An exercise is a controlled, objective-driven activity that is used to test or practice the procedures or processes in place to manage an emergency or the capability of an organisation (or multiple organisations) to deal with a particular emergency situation. An exercise can range from small and simple (such as a planning group discussing an emergency plan) to large and complex (such as a major multi-agency event involving several organisations and participants enacting a real-life scenario).

Why Hold an Exercise?

A well designed exercise provides a safe environment to test capabilities, familiarise personnel with roles and responsibilities and foster meaningful interaction and communication across organisations. Exercises are the most effective means of:

- testing and validating policies, plans, procedures, training, equipment and interagency arrangements;
- training personnel and clarifying roles and responsibilities;
- improving interagency coordination and communication;
- identifying gaps in resources;
- improving individual performance;

- identifying opportunities for improvement;
- building confidence;
- providing opportunities for discussion and feedback.

Exercises are an essential component of emergency preparedness and should be used to enhance the capability of an organisation and contribute to continuous improvement.

To be most effective, exercises must be tailored to meet the identified need, aim and objectives, so they should be structured and managed.

Types of Exercises

Exercising can take place in many forms and be either small or large, simple or complex. Small exercises generally test a specific function and involve just one agency. An example of a small single agency exercise may be a local government setting up an evacuation centre, at the request of a Hazard Management Agency (HMA).

Large exercises usually involve more than one agency and are usually referred to as multi-agency or whole-of-government exercises. Multi-agency exercises are conducted by more than one agency. The need for such an exercise is usually identified through:

- a particular agency or agencies identifying the need(s);
- the SEMC and its subcommittees identifying priorities to address the greatest risks to the State's preparedness;
- an evaluation of data collected by the SECT.

The most commonly used exercise types are discussion exercises, functional exercises and field exercises. Any exercise type may be used to meet the exercising requirements under State EM Policy section 4.8.

Discussion exercises are designed to stimulate discussion of issues or to assess plans, arrangements, policies and procedures. Discussion exercises include seminars, agency presentations and hypotheticals. Discussion exercises can take the form of single agency or multi-agency exercise(s). They should explore the broader issues identified through a capability gap analysis and result in an agreement or resolution between the participants.

Functional exercises are a repetitive, methodical activity undertaken to reinforce specific skills, procedures or arrangements. These exercises are designed to familiarise, educate and inform individuals and groups of their roles and responsibilities, explore capabilities, understand multiple functions and interagency relationships and interdependencies. Functional exercises take place in an operational environment and require participants to perform the functions of their roles. Functional exercises should familiarise and guide participants through their emergency management role(s) or function(s).

Field exercises are generally a large scale, complex activity conducted in 'real time' under simulated conditions involving the deployment of personnel and other resources. Field exercises are designed to achieve maximum realism and test organisational performance and interagency cooperation.

Critical components required for the response or recovery of an event may be exercised individually or collectively. Unless exercised previously, the following should not be notionalised during a field exercise:

multi-agency Command and Control arrangements;

- interagency communications and data sharing arrangements;
- the actioning of handover arrangements;
- the provision of community warnings and community information;
- the establishment of an Incident Support Group (ISG), Operational Area Support Group (OASG), and/or State Emergency Coordination Group (SECG);
- include the transition to local government.

The Western Australian Government's Approach

The SEMC recommends a structured approach to exercise management to:

- ensure exercises are coordinated and conducted in a systematic way;
- reduce duplication of exercise management activities within and across government agencies;
- maximise resources across agencies;
- learn from the findings of exercises conducted across government, validate that lessons are learned and capability is improving;
- ensure a consistent approach across all government emergency management agencies.

The State Emergency Management Exercise Framework

The State Emergency Management Exercise Framework (State EM Exercise Framework) consists of three components:

1. a continuous capability-based exercise program;
2. a State-level exercise program;
3. the formation of a SECT to provide State-level exercise support.

Together these components will form the Western Australian Government's exercise management process for single agency, multi-agency, whole-of- government exercises, as outlined in Figure 1.

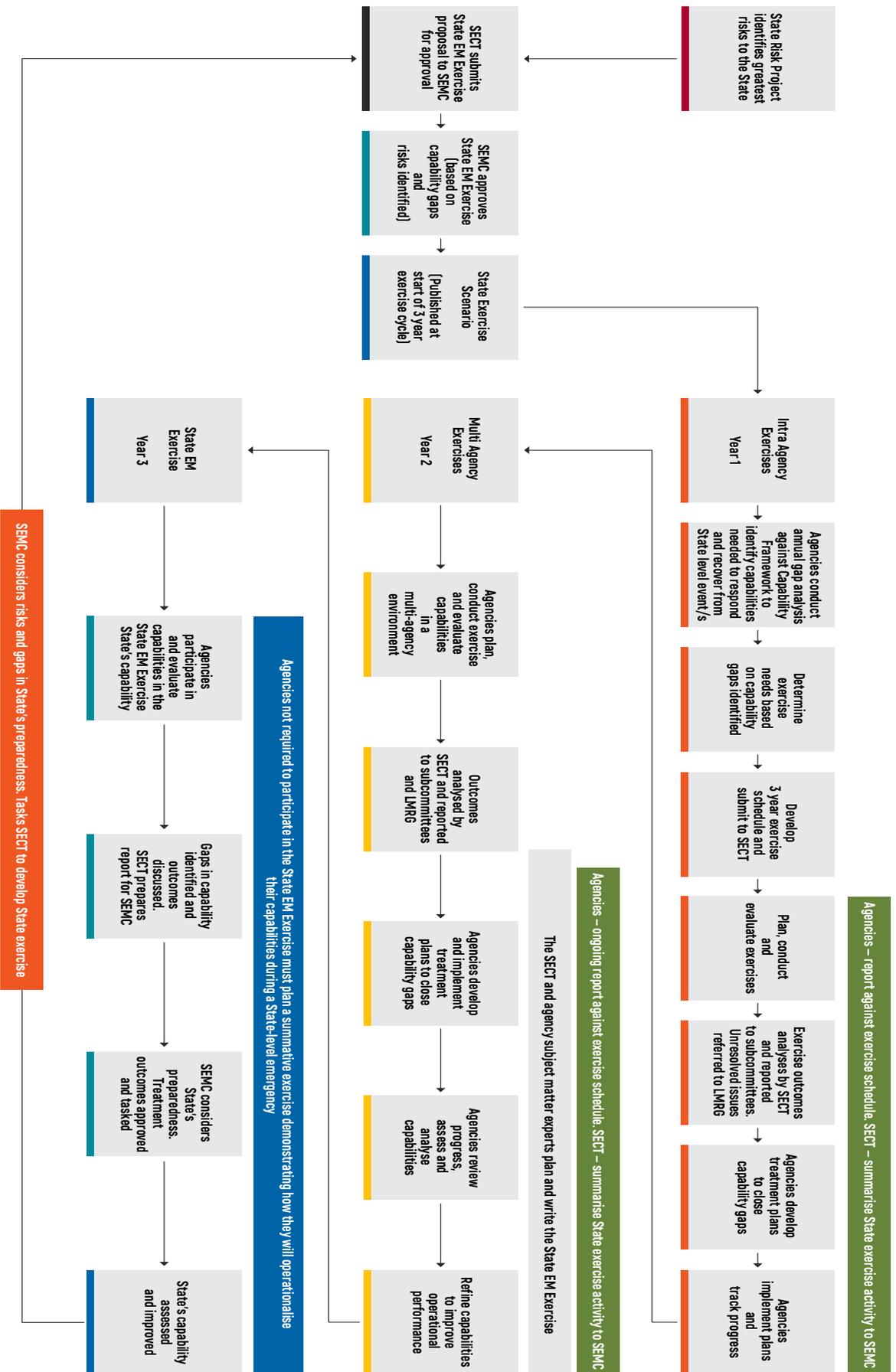


Figure 1: The Emergency Management Exercise Cycle
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Capability-Based Exercise Program

HMA, Combat Agencies, Support Organisations, public authorities with roles and responsibilities under the State Emergency Management Framework (State EM Framework), District Emergency Management Committees (DEMCs) and local governments are required to develop and maintain capability-based exercises as their continuous 'business as usual' exercises program (State EM Plan section 4.7.1).

Under the State EM Exercise Framework, agencies will use the SEMC Emergency Management Capability Framework as a baseline to determine their exercise needs and requirements to close self-assessed capability gaps and report on their activity. Agencies within the capability-based exercise program will continue to be resourced and funded by as per existing arrangements.

The State-Level Exercise Program

The SEMC strategically guides and facilitates the State-level exercise program to assess the emergency management sector capability to manage multiple concurrent hazards. A State-level exercise will be held every three years (State EM Plan section 4.7.2).

As agencies continue to build capability through exercises over a three year period they will be progressively working towards participating in a protracted multi-agency, multi-hazard, State-level exercise in the third year. The State-level exercise will be a summative exercise designed to bring capability components together.

Summative exercises focus on the outcomes of the exercise and evaluate the performance of the participants against a standard or benchmark i.e. the SEMC Emergency Management Capability Framework.

The State Exercise Coordination Team (SECT)

The SECT is the coordinating body for emergency management exercises conducted within Western Australia. It comprises representatives from various government agencies and provides both a strategic exercise plan for government and specific guidance for individual exercises.

If you are running an exercise, the SECT can provide advice on the development, delivery and reporting of exercises under the State EM Exercise Framework. By engaging with the SECT and agency-specific appointed official routinely, you will ensure your exercise has the support necessary to succeed.

SEMC Emergency Management Capability Framework

The SEMC Emergency Management Capability Framework (Figure 2) identifies a series of core capabilities across the aspects of Preparedness, Prevention, Response and Recovery. When informed by risk, these core capabilities can provide the 'common themes' to be exercised.

How do you exercise against the Capability Framework?

In its simplest form a capability is the power or ability to do something.

So how does this translate to emergency management? It is the powers (legislation, plans, policies, procedures, structures and arrangements) and the abilities (skills, resources, technologies) that we need to respond to, manage and recover from emergencies that may impact on our State.

When informed by risk and applied across the aspects of Preparedness, Prevention, Response and Recovery they provide the 'common themes' to be exercised.

Under the State EM Exercise Framework, agencies must conduct an annual capability analysis to determine

their exercise needs and requirements to close self- assessed capability gaps (State EM Policy section 4.8). Identified capability gaps should be reflected in the exercise schedules submitted to the SECT. To complete a capability gap analysis agencies will:

- identify the core capabilities required to perform their role and responsibilities under the State EM Plan, State Hazard Plans and/or State Support Plans;
- assess their ability to meet the achievement objectives for each identified core capability;
- determine their exercising needs based on any capability gaps identified during the analysis.

Some capabilities, such as Command, Control and Coordination, are applicable across multiple hazards. When the same Command, Control and Coordination arrangements are used across multiple hazards, exercising this capability using a hazard specific scenario may strengthen this capability across all hazards and reduce the burden to frequently exercise this capability for each hazard.



Figure 2: The SEMC Emergency Management Capability Framework

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The Exercise Management Model

The Exercise Management Model (Figure 3) highlights the four phases of exercise management. This guideline outlines the steps required in each phase to ensure your exercise is effective and successful.

Regardless of the size of an exercise, it is important to plan for your evaluation throughout the process. Following these steps will help you to make a structured approach to conceptualising, planning, conducting and evaluating your exercise. The level of detail in each stage can be scaled according to the needs of the particular exercise.

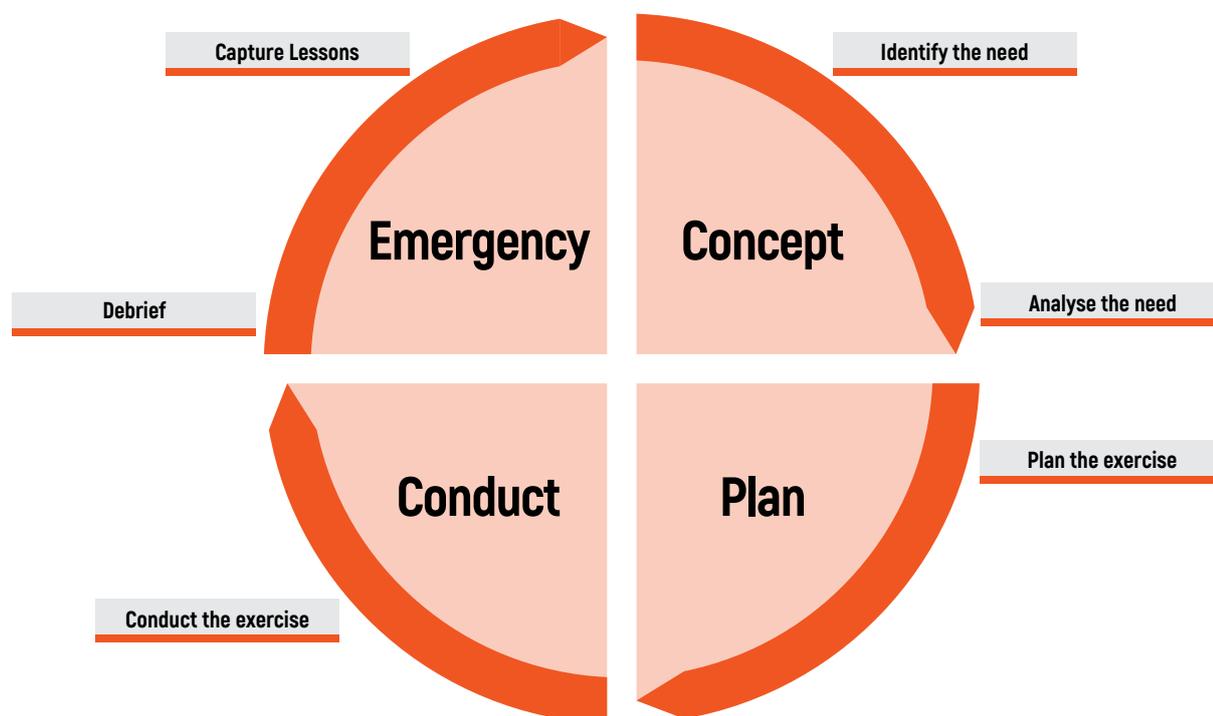
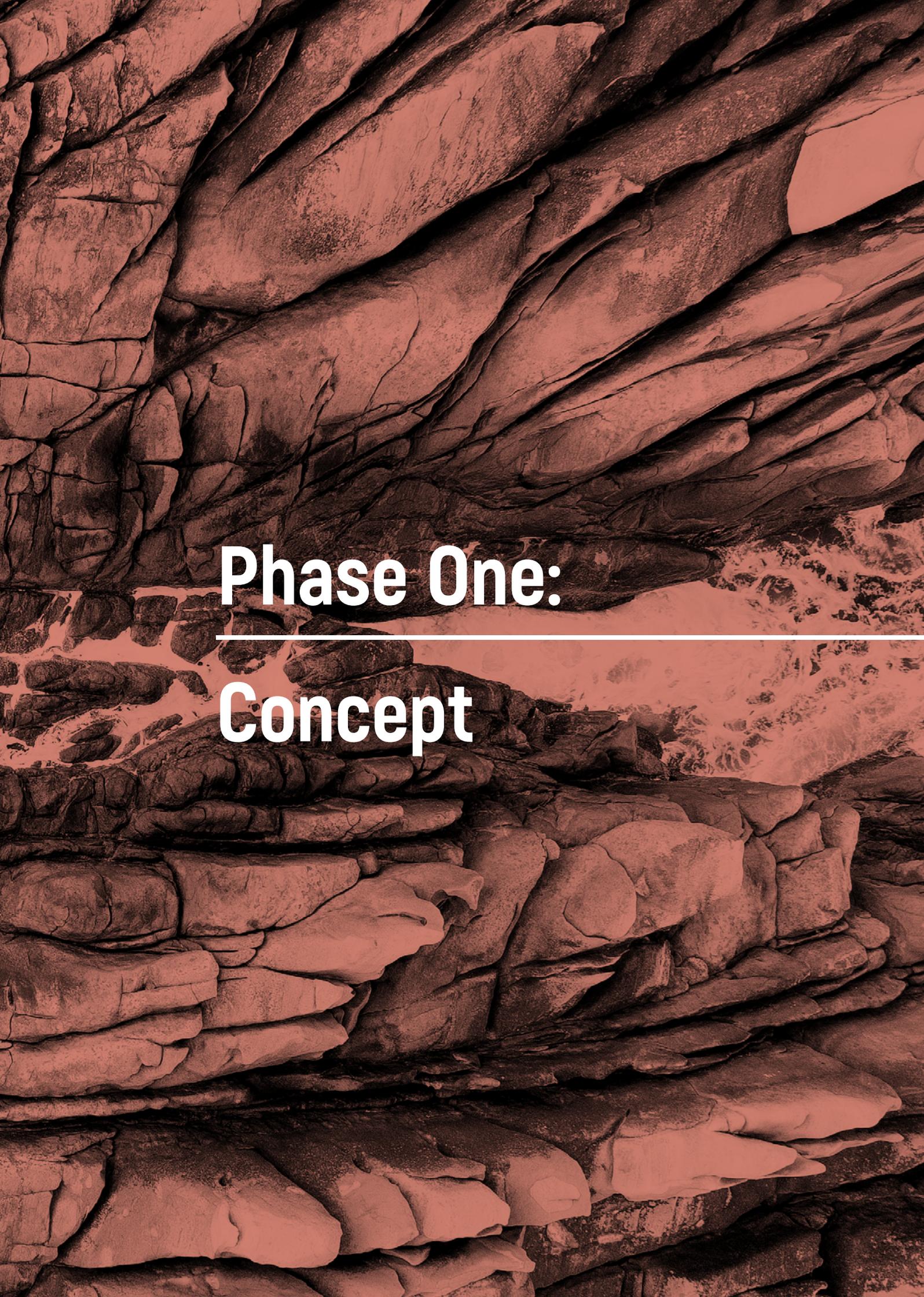


Figure 3: Exercise Management Model



Phase One:

Concept

In this section you will:

- identify and analyse the need for an exercise
- identify the Exercise Director
- seek input from others
- develop an exercise proposal

Identify and Analyse the Need

The first phase of exercise management is determining what needs to be exercised. The starting point is to first identify if it is necessary to test any lessons learnt from previous exercising. Did treatment options implemented succeed?

Once you have identified what needs to be exercised, you will need to develop a proposal seeking authority to proceed. The driver for exercising needs to be linked to clearly defined outcomes relevant to the State, that builds confidence in capability.

There are several ways the capabilities to be exercised might be identified. These include:

- a review of agency policies and procedures;
- observations of agency operations/operational reports;
- changes to arrangements, policies or plans;
- new equipment, procedures or practices;
- identified gaps in the skills and capability of personnel;
- legislative or regulatory requirements;
- past exercise evaluation outcomes.

An exercise may also be deemed necessary by one of the SEMC subcommittees and articulated through the SECT.

Once a need has been identified, carefully determine if an exercise is the most effective and efficient way to meet that need. It may be that there are other more appropriate solutions such as training, education or developing and communicating a new procedure.

When determining if an exercise is the best solution, some factors to consider include:

- the cost of a running the exercise;
- the timing and size;
- the logistics (including location, infrastructure, and impact of the weather);
- the resource implications and availability of relevant personnel;
- any administrative arrangements;
- legislative requirements.

You should also check whether a similar exercise has been run in the past by your agency or by another agency and review post-exercise reports for any lessons learned before you start. The SECT can be a good source of this information.

Identify the Exercise Director

Exercise Directors provide strategic oversight and direction on the planning, conduct and evaluation of the exercise. They are responsible for approving the exercise proposal and all other supporting documentation through the exercise. In most exercises, the Exercise Director will represent the lead agency that is supporting, conducting and/or financing the exercise.

There may be more than one Exercise Director for multi-agency exercises, as each of the major participants will often provide their own Exercise Director for strategic advice and authority.

Exercise Directors provide the authority to conduct the exercise; however, they usually do not have a hands-on role in the planning or conduct phases and will appoint others to take on specific roles during the concept development, planning, conduct and evaluation phases of an exercise.

The Exercise Director may have already been appointed and may have tasked you with developing the exercise. Or you may need to clarify who the Exercise Director is that you will be reporting to.

The Exercise Director will be ultimately in charge of the exercise and provide the SECT with the final post-exercise report

Seek Input from Others

Talking to others about the exercise need will help to clarify the concept and provide input that will assist in developing the exercise proposal.

For larger exercises, it may be useful to convene a meeting of relevant people to help you.



A concept Development Meeting Agenda template is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 1.1)

Develop an Exercise Proposal

Once you have decided on an exercise, you will need to develop an exercise proposal. This gives a broad overview of what is to be achieved and how. It provides a conceptual framework around the planning of an exercise, as well as background information, objectives, governance structure, an overview of the scenario and key participating agencies. It may also be used to gain funding to run an exercise.

Once approved by the Exercise Director, the exercise proposal provides the authority to formally begin planning activities.

The exercise proposal should include:

- a summary of the proposal including the title, lead agency and sponsor, costings and contact details;
- information about the capability gap including the exercise need (based on your findings from identifying and analysing the need), a gap analysis and the expected outcomes;
- a summary of the proposed exercise plan including:
 - exercise aim;
 - exercise objectives;
 - exercise scope;
 - exercise style;
 - governance;
 - participating areas and stakeholders;
 - exercise schedule;
 - resources required;
 - risk management;
 - proposed budget;
- an evaluation strategy and reporting schedule.



An Exercise Proposal template is in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 1.2)

Exercise Aim

The exercise aim states what you intend to achieve by undertaking the exercise.

The aim should be presented as a simple statement; it can be as generic or as specific as required to meet the needs of the exercise.

There should be only one exercise aim – you will be able to outline more detail when you prepare the exercise objectives.

The exercise aim should be an action (use words like 'produce', 'test', 'assess'), be positive, clear, concise and achievable and should provide context (such as 'in accordance with standard operating procedures').

Example of an exercise aim for a small exercise:

To practice the response of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) and stakeholders to a simulated, bulk fuel spill and fire at the Kwinana Fuel Distribution Terminal.

Exercise Objectives

Exercise objectives are specific statements describing what individuals, groups or agencies participating in the exercise will achieve. While there should only be one exercise aim, you can have many exercise objectives.

Exercise objectives:

- must be aligned to the SEMC Emergency Management Capability Framework;
- must be agreed on very early in the concept development phase;
- must be clear and concise;
- should be simple and written in commonly understood language;
- should be measurable and avoid words such as 'timely', 'effective' and 'efficient'
- (unless these terms can be quantified and measured).

Capability-based objectives will allow agencies to focus the exercise on addressing self-assessed capability gaps.



Capability Framework: Print on A3 to pass print accessibility

Capability Element: Cross-cutting

Core Capability: Public Information and Warnings

Capability Description: Provide timely, targeted, and tailored information and warnings that enable individuals, communities and business to make informed decisions, take protective action, and reduce the potential impacts and consequences of an emergency before, during and after an event.

Exercise Objective: Demonstrate the ability to release an actionable Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) message within the timeframe requested by the Incident Controller and in accordance with State EM Response Procedure 4.3.

It is recommended that you follow the SMART approach to developing exercise objectives. In an exercise management context this means:

Table 1 SMART Objectives

Name	Compliance
Specific	Clear and unambiguous and state exactly what is expected.
Measurable	Clear about what is being measured.
Achievable	Realistic and attainable within the parameters imposed by the exercise.
Relevant	Relevant to the exercise aim and the needs of participants.
Task-Related	Based around activities that can be performed by exercise participants and observed by exercise control (EXCON) staff.

The extent to which the exercise achieves these objectives will be measured throughout the exercise and reported on in the post-exercise report at the end of the process.

Being clear from the start about what is being measured, and how, will:

- help the planning team design the detail of the exercise;
- assist facilitators to guide participants during the exercise;
- help evaluators to measure performance during the exercise.

Involving evaluators early can help ensure that the exercise objectives are appropriate and that they can be measured. Breaking objectives down into smaller component sub-objectives can also help evaluators understand the focus areas for evaluation.

Ideally there should be performance measures or standards in place as part of existing operating procedures or that are to be developed before the exercise is conducted.

These standards provide evaluators with a benchmark against which to assess performance and are used to quantify the exercise objectives to reflect aspects of the task that are critical to successful performance. These aspects will determine what evaluators will measure and use as evidence to support their conclusions about performance during the activity.

It is recommended that you refer to Phase 4 - Evaluate of this guideline before finalising your exercise objectives to ensure that you understand the evaluation process and can plan with this in mind.

Example exercise objectives for a small single agency exercise:

Aim: Validate the effectiveness of the Kwinana Fuel Distribution Terminal Response Plan in response to a large flammable liquid fuel leak and fire.

Objectives:

1. Demonstrate the initial response arrangements to facilitate command and control prior to the arrival of a DFES District Officer [Aligned to the Emergency Response: command, control and coordination capability].
2. Mobilise and demobilise the Kwinana Fuel Distribution Terminal Portable On-Demand Foam System (PODS) within the timeframes requested by the Incident Controller [Aligned to the Resources: Equipment/critical resources capability].

Exercise Scope

The exercise scope describes the boundaries in which the exercise will be conducted so you know what is and isn't included. Defining the scope makes it easier to avoid 'scope creep' (doing more, or different, than you planned to).

The exercise scope should:

- be specific, yet broad enough to achieve the exercise objectives;
- consider the level of commitment of key participating agencies, including any private sector parties involved;
- not be beyond the capability of participants (the aim is to test but not to break);
- consider the level of involvement of participants (first response only, up to an incident control centre or district/regional or state coordination centre).

Example of exercise scope for a small exercise:

Exercise 'Transfundo' will include participation from DFES, Caltex and stakeholders occupying the Kwinana precinct. This exercise will aim to practice and assess the DFES response to a fuel spill and subsequent fire. The exercise will be tailored to address specific agency needs relating to response capability. It will allow concentration on priority areas relating to overall deployment of resources and the operational process of dealing with the situation.

Response by other partner agencies in support of the incident will be notional and out of scope of this exercise.

Exercise Style

While great detail about the exercise is not required at the proposal stage, the exercise proposal should state the style of the exercise (discussion, functional or field) and a brief summary of what is intended.

For more information see Phase 2 - Plan and Design the Exercise: Choose an Exercise Style.

Example of an exercise style for a small exercise:

Field exercise: The exercise will require a response to the site of a simulated fuel spill and fire. The fire will be notional.

Governance

Your proposal should outline the governance structure for your exercise.

This should include:

- the names of the Exercise Director(s);
- details of the Exercise Planning Team (or teams).

For a large multi-agency exercise, you should also include an outline of the proposed governance arrangements for the conduct phase if known.

For more information on governance see Phase 2 - Appoint an Exercise Planning Team.

Example of exercise governance for a small exercise:

Party (Person, position or group)	Governance Role	Point Of Contact
	Exercise Sponsor	
	Exercise Director	
	Exercise Steering Committee/ Planning Team	

Participating Areas and Stakeholders

The exercise proposal should include the names of any participating groups, such as other government agencies, business units within your own agency or external organisations.

It should also outline the key stakeholders who will be involved in, or affected by, the exercise.

Exercise Schedule

The exercise proposal should include a summary of the exercise schedule, noting that the detailed planning has not yet occurred. This should include the proposed dates to hold the exercise.

Resources Required

The exercise proposal should include a summary of the key resources required to conduct the exercise. This could include people, equipment and venues.

Risk Management

A detailed risk management process will occur during the planning process, but your exercise proposal should include a summary of the key risks and the mitigation processes that will be in place to manage them. It should also include the risk of not undertaking the exercise.

Work Health and Safety

The exercise proposal should outline any arrangements that will be made to manage work health and safety issues that arise during the exercise.

Proposed Budget

The exercise proposal should provide an indication of the budget required to plan, conduct and evaluate the exercise. This should include venues, travel and administration, any training required and involvement of specialised expertise.

Evaluation Strategy and Reporting Schedule

The exercise proposal should also outline what you will be measuring in the exercise and how.

An exercise evaluation, detailed in Phase 2 - Plan, provides additional information about planning an exercise evaluation.

It is strongly recommended that you read Phase 4 - Evaluation of this guideline before you develop your evaluation strategy as you will need to consider evaluation throughout the whole exercise management cycle.

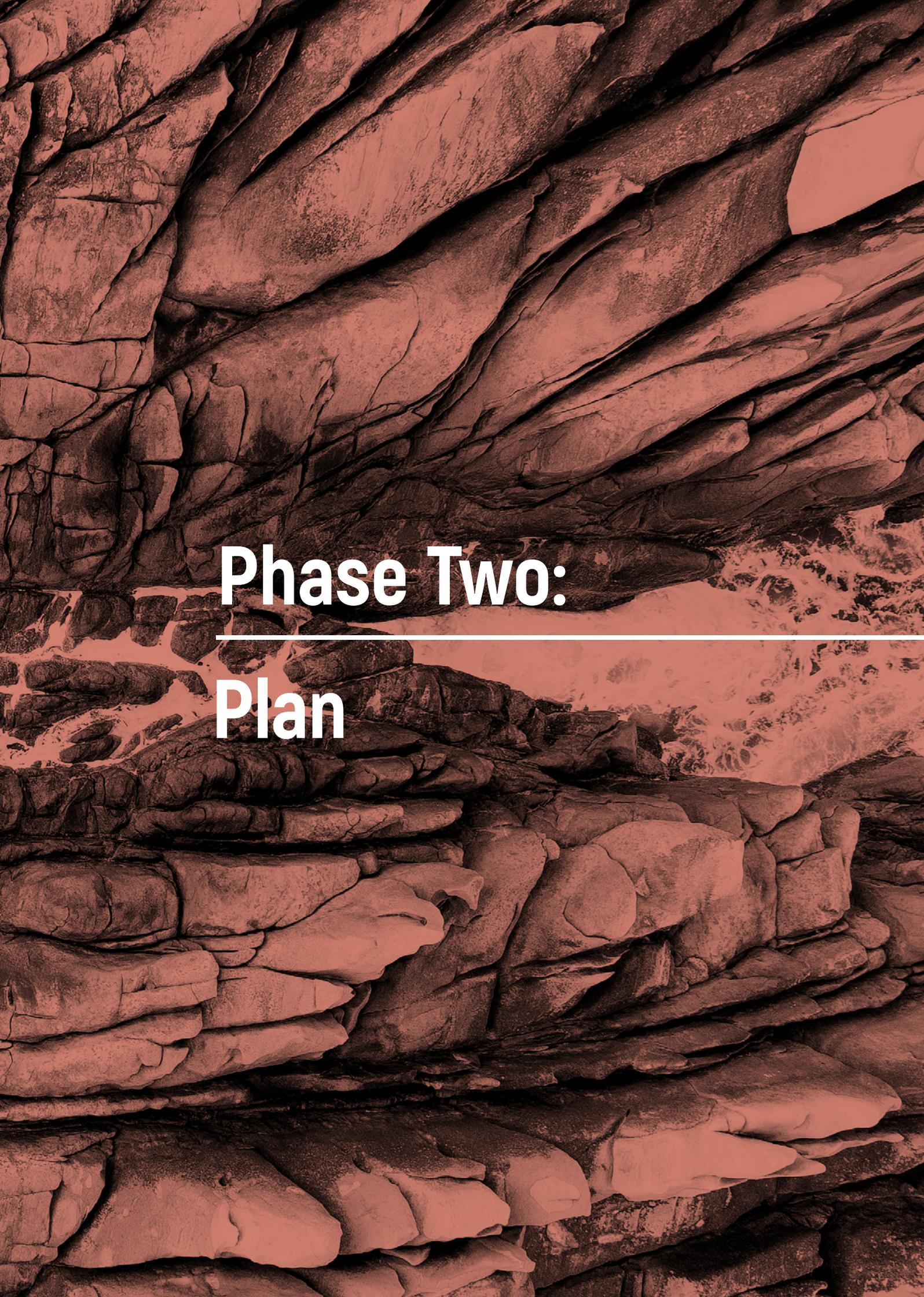
Example of an evaluation strategy for a small exercise:

All exercise activities will be subjected to evaluation in relation to the exercise objectives and associated key performance indicators. Objectives will be assessed through a qualitative performance rating scale and observations will be captured in relation to each objective. The evaluation team is responsible for planning and conducting the exercise evaluation and for developing an evaluator report.

At the completion of the exercise activities, a formal debrief will be conducted to identify key issues, insights, gaps and potential actions to take following the exercise.

At the completion of the exercise activities, a post-exercise report will be drafted by the planning team. The post-exercise report will include a summary, during the formal debrief of observations and insights, lessons identified by all agencies involved, as well as an action plan to close any capability gaps or to sustain an identified strengths.

The post-exercise report will go through a validation/resolution process at an agency level. The final report will be submitted to the Exercise Director and the agency's representative on the SECT for consideration.



Phase Two:

Plan

In this section you will:

- appoint an Exercise Planning Team
- conduct exercise planning meetings
- plan and design the exercise
- plan your exercise evaluation
- prepare exercise planning documents

Appoint an Exercise Planning Team

The role of an Exercise Planning Team is to plan and design the exercise. As you should now already have an approved exercise proposal (developed in Phase 1), you already have a general idea of the size and complexity of the exercise you plan to undertake.

The Exercise Planning Team is not necessarily the same as the team who will conduct the exercise (Exercise Control or 'EXCON' Team) but typically there will be several people who are in both teams.

Exercise Planning Team Structure

The size and composition of the Exercise Planning Team will vary with the size, style and complexity of the planned exercise. Regardless of the size of the Exercise Planning Team, it is important to consider the functions of each role within the team and ensure that relevant issues are considered in the planning.

A small exercise usually involves one agency with a focus on a single, specific operation or function where a small team might perform several functions or one person might manage the whole process. The style and complexity of the exercise will dictate the size of the Exercise Planning Team.

Large exercises usually involve personnel across several agencies, so the Exercise Planning Team will be larger and typically contains sub-teams with specific functions. The Exercise Planning Team for large exercises is made up of those directly involved in planning the exercise and should include representation from all participating agencies.

Members of the Exercise Planning Team will develop the exercise plan and the supporting documents that sit beneath it.

Figure 4 outlines the typical structure of an exercise planning team and the functions that need to be covered in the team. In a very small exercise one person may perform several functions. Additionally, as the exercise grows in complexity, more than one person may be involved in each function.

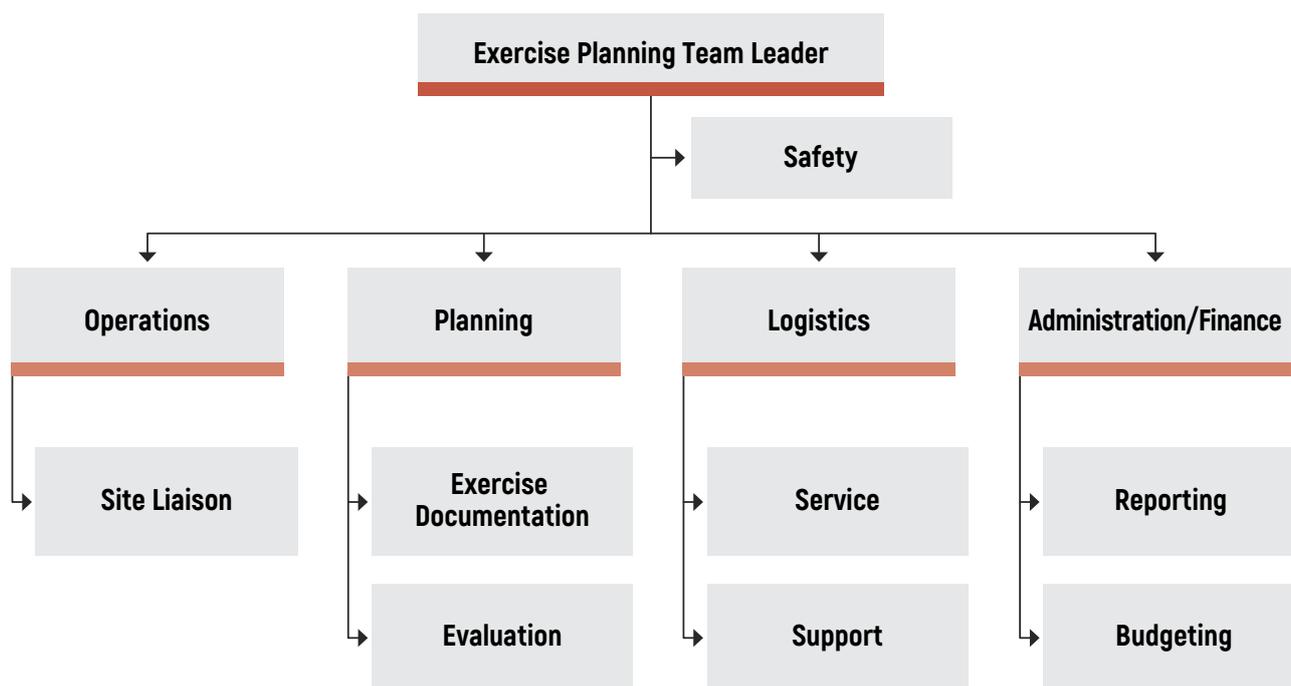


Figure 4 Exercise Planning Team Structure

Exercise Director(s)

In Phase 1 - Concept you have determined who the Exercise Director(s) is who will provide strategic oversight and direction on the planning, conduct and evaluation of the exercise.

The Exercise Director will usually have a role in appointing the Exercise Planning Team Leader and Exercise Planning Team.

Exercise Planning Team Leader

The Exercise Planning Team Leader is appointed by the Exercise Director. The Exercise Planning Team Leader assigns exercise activities and responsibilities, provides guidance, establishes timelines and monitors the development process.

In a small exercise, the role of the Exercise Planning Team Leader might be taken on by the Exercise Director or they appoint someone who has a good understanding of conducting and evaluating an exercise.

The Exercise Planning Team Leader is typically the person who will be the Exercise Controller during the conduct phase.

Safety Team

The Safety Team (or Safety Coordinator) is responsible for developing the risk management plan. Taking a systematic risk management approach throughout the exercise will reduce the degree of uncertainty and increase decision-making accuracy and the likelihood of positive outcomes.

As part of the risk management process, the Safety Team should consider risks that may occur during the conduct phase (such as urgent duty driving or the safety of venues) as well as risks to the exercise itself (such as the impact of a real event arising on the day, the risk of contravening workplace health and safety or industrial relations regulations).

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Other safety considerations include:

- Has a risk management plan been prepared and hazard control options initiated?
- Is everyone trained to undertake their task during the exercise?
- Has everyone been briefed about the safety requirements of the exercise?
- Are there any standard operating procedures required for the exercise and have they been prepared?
- Are safety officers required to monitor the exercise?
- What contingency plans are in place?

Outputs from the Safety Team may include:

- a risk management plan.

See Phase 2 - Prepare Exercise Plan Documents: Risk Management Plan for more information.

Operations Team

Your team should include staff who can provide operations expertise. For example, have input into the technical and functional aspects of the exercise to enable the scenario to be properly developed, rolled out and evaluated. This means developing all of the operational document necessary for conducting the exercise.

The Operations Team will also need to secure a venue for the exercise that is appropriate to its size and style. They should consider availability and suitability when choosing a venue and take the following factors into account:

- work health and safety;
- visibility of exercise activities to the public/media;
- realism;
- vulnerability to damage;
- rehabilitation issues;
- access;
- available services (e.g. power).

The Operations Team should conduct a site inspection before the exercise. A professional assessment/inspection may be required to assess a venue's suitability or risk and a contingency plan may be required in case a venue becomes unavailable.

When a field exercise is being conducted at a venue, it is vital to ensure that arrangements are in place in relation to legal indemnities or any damages that occur.

Outputs from the Operations Team include:

- master schedule of events;
- exercise control instructions;
- exercise control documents;

exercise inputs.

See Phase 2 - Prepare Exercise Planning Documents for more information on these documents.

Planning Team

The Planning Team has a wide range of responsibilities including:

- compiling and coordinating all exercise documentation;
- collecting and reviewing policies, plans and procedures that will be assessed in the exercise;
- planning and coordinating all aspects of the exercise evaluation;
- writing the post-exercise report;
- identifying evaluation roles and requirements during the planning process;
- ensuring the team members involved in planning have the relevant subject-matter expertise.

The Planning Team is also responsible for developing the communications plans for the planning phase, as well as for the exercise itself. This includes developing real and pseudo media strategies.

Real media refers to media and public information strategies throughout the planning and conduct phases of the exercise, such as:

- briefing government, industry partners and stakeholders;
- developing a public information strategy that outlines strategies to identify and inform residents and businesses close to the exercise site who could be concerned or alarmed by the activities, or whose day-to-day activities could be interrupted.

Depending on the exercise aim and objectives, exercises can benefit from community involvement. The Planning Team should consider whether it is appropriate to include the community in the actual conduct of the exercise. Local involvement (such as in a community evacuation exercise) promotes resilience in the community by raising awareness of local plans and encouraging preparedness. Community members or representatives can be involved throughout the exercise management process and can provide invaluable advice about possible exercise needs that exist or plans that the community would like to practice or test.

The Planning Team should also involve community stakeholders during planning wherever the exercise might disrupt normal community activities. It is important in the planning phase to identify all messages early and ensure they are clear and consistent. As a minimum, the local community needs to be engaged so it understands and is aware of any impact or disruption the exercise may cause.

Pseudo media refers to the simulated media required for the exercise, that is, the media activity that would be required if the exercise were real. Pseudo media can add realism and pressure to exercise scenarios and may include pre-prepared news reports, as well as live footage or online reporting.

Members of the Planning Team may also be part of the EXCON Team during the conduct phase to manage any media issues that arise during the exercise.

Outputs from the Planning Team may include:

- an exercise plan and other planning documents (including collating documents prepared by other teams);
- exercise evaluation plan including:
 - appointing an evaluation team;
 - evaluator data collection plans and tools;
 - evaluator briefings;
 - evaluator report templates;
- role player appointment and briefing;
- communication plans (internal and external) and supporting documents (such as media strategies and media releases for real media and pseudo media activity).

See Phase 2 - Prepare Exercise Planning Documents for more information on these documents.

Logistics Team

The Logistics Team is responsible for identifying, sourcing, setting up, maintaining and repatriating the physical resources and services required to conduct the exercise. This can include services such as transportation, barricading, signage, catering, real-life medical capability and exercise security. Other support services might be communications, purchasing, general supplies, managing observers and recruiting and managing role players.

A member of the team should be appointed as the Logistics Officer in the EXCON Team during the exercise (see Phase 3—Conduct).

The Logistics Team is also responsible for coordinating any observers of the exercise, including VIPs. This involves balancing expectations, exercise requirements, agency interests, safety and security restrictions and available resources. Some of these activities include:

- arranging transport and accommodation;
- managing cultural and protocol issues;
- the reception of visiting personnel/observers;
- post-exercise briefings and activities;
- catering.

Administration/Finance

The team also requires someone who can provide administration and financial management support while planning and developing the exercise. This could include identifying the need for legal advice in relation to the exercise such as:

- contingent liability;
- applicable legislative issues;
- liaison on legal issues related to the exercise.

All stakeholders should also have a clear understanding of the financial arrangements in place for the exercise, including:

- management of any exercise budget;
- guidelines for exercise expenditure;
- approval and payment of any overtime;
- responsibility for the rehabilitation of damaged facilities;
- how the budget will be reported.

Hold Exercise Planning Meetings

Larger exercises should have at least three meetings during the planning phase:

- an initial planning meeting;
- mid-planning meeting(s);
- a final planning meeting.

Meetings should be scheduled in advance, compulsory to attend, minuted and should include an action list to ensure identified activities are completed on time.

Planning meetings are more effective when stakeholders ensure the same representatives attend throughout the planning phase.

Specialist working groups or teams may need to meet separately and more often to work on specific tasks or functions.

Initial Planning Meeting

The initial planning meeting is the most important of the planning meetings: it produces broad agreement on the exercise framework, allowing further planning towards conducting the exercise.

The exercise proposal should be used as the basis for discussions and as many stakeholders as practicable should be included in this process.

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The outcomes of the initial planning meeting should be:

- broad agreement on the scope of and purpose of the exercise, including the general idea and special idea (see Phase 2 - Develop the Exercise Scenario);
- sufficient guidance and agreement to enable the exercise plan to be developed;
- planning teams/coordinators tasked to develop documentation associated with the exercise.

The outcomes of the initial planning meeting should be:

- broad agreement on the scope of and purpose of the exercise, including the general idea and special idea (see Phase 2 - Develop the Exercise Scenario);
- sufficient guidance and agreement to enable the exercise plan to be developed;
- planning teams/coordinators tasked to develop documentation associated with the exercise.

Exercise Size	Planning Meeting Requirements
Small	For a small exercise, you may only need an initial planning meeting.
Large	For a large exercise, the initial planning meeting may be a conference that extends over a number of days and involves sub-teams breaking away to meet separately.



An Initial Planning Meeting Agenda template is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 2.1).

Mid-Planning Meeting

The purpose of mid-planning (or ongoing) meetings is to design the exercise, discuss and refine exercise management arrangements and review the status of the exercise planning.

These meetings also allow any issues that arise to be identified and managed.

Depending on the complexity of the exercise, it may be necessary to conduct several ongoing planning meetings.



An Mid Planning Meeting Agenda template is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 2.2).

Final Planning Meeting

The final planning meeting allows for review of all exercise planning and lets you confirm that planning is complete and all arrangements are in place for participants, exercise staff and logistics.

At this point, the exercise scenario and all documents should be validated by conducting a trial run of all or part of your exercise.

Avoid introducing any new planning detail at this stage. The meeting should identify any outstanding issues and allocate responsibility for their resolution.

The final planning meeting should be held a number of weeks before the exercise and preferably before related activities (such as workshops or training) begin that brief or involve participants.



An Final Planning Meeting Agenda template is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 2.3).

Plan and Design the Exercise

Part of the planning phase includes designing the detail of the exercise, including:

- exercise style;
- exercise scenario;
- general idea (broad background information issued in advance of the exercise);
- special idea (the information used to drive the exercise on the day).

This information is collated in the exercise plan.

Choose an Exercise Style

There are three main exercise styles:

Table 2 Exercise Styles

Category	Discussion Exercise	Functional Exercise	Field Exercise
Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seminar • agency presentation • hypothetical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • related to discussion exercises, but take place in an operational environment and require participants to perform the functions of their roles • functional exercises should familiarise and guide participants through their emergency management role(s) or function(s). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simulates an incident as realistically as possible. Event communicated to responders in the same way as a real event • personnel responding to the scene of the incident proceed to the scene where they see a mock emergency (e.g. plane/rail crash with victims) • actions at the scene serve as an input to the simulation taking place at interagency coordination centres

Category	Discussion Exercise	Functional Exercise	Field Exercise
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to familiarise (new) personnel with (new) procedures to share resources and procedural information to build networks and develop a shared understanding of different agency capabilities and approaches to make a presentation to an audience to examine strategic, political or complex issues to identify alternative solutions to a common problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to test or practise a particular function, e.g. managing an incident or emergency in an incident management team using maps and notional resources to conduct functions within the environment as if a real event were happening outside to test procedures as a prerequisite to a field exercise to walk personnel and managers through their roles and responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> to provide the ultimate testing of functions which, because of the expense involved, should be reserved for the highest priority hazards and functions
Led By	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> experienced facilitator, who presents information and guides discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercise Director, umpires, observers, role players/simulators, emergency management experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exercise Director, umpires, observers, simulators/role players
Players	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> those who will be required to respond to the situation/emergency representatives from various functions/levels within the agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number and type depends on the functions/agencies being tested all levels of the organisation with emergency management roles and responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> number and type depends on the functions/agencies being tested

Category	Discussion Exercise	Functional Exercise	Field Exercise
Facilities Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conference room (laid out to promote discussion and eye contact between teams/groups) audio/visual presentation equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> coordination centres separate areas/rooms required for simulators/role players equipment such as telephones, radios, email, television, maps etc. to achieve realism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> event unfolds in a realistic setting (e.g. rail crash on rail line) coordination centres separate areas/rooms for simulators/role players
Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maximum 1 to 2 hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4–6 hours to a full day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4–6 hours to a full day or more
Planning Required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> simple to prepare (2 weeks is usually enough) participants need no previous training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> plan about 6 months in advance because participants and directing staff require training; and it may require significant allocation of resources and a major commitment of personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> plan at least one year in advance; should follow relevant discussion exercises and functional exercises requires extensive investment of time, effort, resources and finance

You should choose the style of exercise that will best meet your exercise aim and objectives. The Exercise Planning Team does not have to choose just one style of exercise – a progressive exercise program (one that becomes more complex as you complete it) can be very useful, as can different styles of exercises (for example, using meetings, field exercises and real-life scenarios in a series or combination) to progressively increase participant learning.

Consider the following when choosing your exercise style:

- the skills or experience of the Exercise Planning Team and EXCON Team;
- training needs;
- commitment of key staff;
- venue availability;
- participant availability;
- other commitments;
- lead time;

- time available to conduct the exercise;
- available resources and budget;
- any associated risks.

Develop the Exercise Scenario

General Idea

The **general idea** is a broad statement of background information designed to provide exercise participants with the knowledge that would be available during a real incident or emergency. It may also give detailed information about specific industries, local events or background information on particular hazards (such as chemicals or seasonal threats).

The general idea is usually issued to participating agencies or personnel well in advance as part of exercise briefings.

Example of a general idea:

Airport X is located 15km from the central business district of 'Y' and services a population of 100,000 people with commercial domestic passenger, freight and private aircraft operations to and from the mining community 'Z'.

The airport facilitates 10 flights a day between the hours of 6 am and 10 pm. Commercial domestic aircraft are Boeing 737-800 aircraft capable of carrying 164 passengers. Private aircraft range from single engine aircraft to twin-engine executive jets.

The airport has one fire and rescue appliance with a crew of five personnel on duty during its operating hours. This crew is supported by three volunteer fire units.

Special Ideas

Special ideas are used to drive the exercise. They provide realistic problems, incidents or information for participants to react to as they would on the job.

They are fed into the exercise as it unfolds. Personnel with specific roles are issued with special ideas at predetermined times to control the flow of events.

Special ideas are used to:

- progressively develop the exercise scenario;
- provide additional information to participants;
- pose problems for participants to solve;
- place limits on participants' actions;
- force action by participants.

Example of a special idea:

- At 0625 an incoming Boeing 737-800 freighter with a crew of three and cargo of general freight reports an engine fire and hydraulic system failure – its estimated time of arrival is 0650.
- At 0655 aircraft touches down with a fire in its port-side engine, it overshoots the runway and crashes into trees beyond the airports southern boundary.
- At 0710 crew manages to evacuate the aircraft.
- At 0712 hot brakes ignite spilt fuel and fire impinges aircraft fuselage.

Further Developing the Scenario

The scenario is further developed and documented through inputs and activities that are built into the exercise planning documents. See detailed scenario documentation in Phase 2 - Prepare Exercise Planning Documents.

Exercise Writing Teams

Exercises require a team to be responsible for writing the exercise. The role of the Exercise Writing Team is to ensure the information provided for the exercise is realistic and accurate.

An Exercise Writing Team may have only two or three people for a small exercise, or many for a large exercise. The team should include subject-matter experts to ensure the information used in the scenario is accurate, realistic and able to be understood by others.

An Exercise Writing Team should have appropriate writing skills, along with an understanding of the aims and objectives of the exercise, to be able to develop the scenario and communicate in a way that those involved in the exercise can understand.

Very large exercises may have an Exercise Writing Team that require more specific expertise, so you should consider.

- Do they have formal training in writing exercises?
- Do they have relevant skills and experience in the subject area for which they will be writing exercise problems?

To ensure continuity throughout the exercise, members of the Exercise Writing Team(s) should be appointed to roles in the EXCON Team during the conduct of the exercise.

Exercise Type	Exercise Writing Team
Small	<p>For a small exercise, the Exercise Writing Team may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be drawn from existing planning staff; • comprise of only a few people.
Large	<p>For a large exercise, the Exercise Writing Team may:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be drawn from several agencies and/or locations; • include many people from within an agency or across agencies.

Selecting Role Players

Using people to role play disaster victims or other roles can add realism to an exercise. However, it does add an extra element of risk that needs to be managed.

When selecting people to role play, consider the following:

- some individuals may react adversely to receiving moulage (using make-up to simulate injuries) and being placed in a scenario that might cause them to recall painful experiences. Exercise managers should ensure appropriate debriefing and psychological First Aid is available, if required;
- role players should fully understand the nature of the required role;
- role players should not have experienced a major incident in the past that is still a sensitive issue for them;
- role players should not have any existing conditions that may affect their role in the exercise, for example, pregnancy or medical conditions such as asthma, epilepsy, blood pressure anomalies, cardiac conditions, back problems, sensitive skin or claustrophobia;
- role players should not be on medication that might affect their role;
- use of minors in an exercise has legal ramifications, including consent, and is not recommended. Children are also more likely to act outside their role.

Exercise planners should also consider if there are any work health and safety requirements or other such legislation that affects using role players and the extent of their duty of care that applies. They should also seek advice about issues such as insurance coverage.

Plan your Exercise Evaluation

Why Evaluate?

Planning your evaluation is a critical part of the planning process and will enable you to effectively evaluate:

- the exercise itself and the extent to which it achieved objectives;
- the conduct of the exercise, including what worked and what didn't, so as to identify areas of improvement for running future exercises.

Planning your evaluation early on enables you to:

- clarify what you will be evaluating and how you will measure it;
- ensure you have measures in place to assess whether your exercise has met the objectives;
- ensure you have people in place to observe and assess everything you want to measure;
- appoint evaluators who are skilled to assess their particular areas;
- brief your evaluators on what is required of them on the day.

It is recommended that you review Phase 4 - Evaluation section of this guideline as part of the planning process.

Develop an Evaluation Plan

The evaluation plan outlines what the exercise is evaluating and how it will be evaluated. The plan will detail who your evaluators are and their responsibilities. The plan should be reviewed throughout the planning process and evaluators should be included in this.

For a small exercise the exercise evaluation plan may be included in the exercise plan.

For more information on writing an evaluation plan see Phase 2 - Prepare Exercise Planning Documents.

Identify Evaluators

Evaluators need to have appropriate skills and expertise in evaluation. They should have skills in writing and collating, observations and developing insights. They should have subject-matter expertise or be able to identify issues for the attention of EXCON. They should not be involved in the identification of lessons.

An evaluator may also be called on to provide impartial and supportive guidance in the planning process. The role of evaluator is not meant to be adversarial or confrontational.

During exercises, evaluators will be assigned to observe different activities based on their subject-matter expertise. They may be assigned to look only at individual tasks or capabilities. They may be asked to look at organisations or at particular functions across the exercise or organisations (e.g. command within an organisation or command, control, coordination, communication and information management across an agency or multiple agencies). This will affect your choice of evaluators.

Responsibilities of Evaluators

The focus for evaluators should be reporting against the exercise objectives, although they may occasionally identify other issues that merit reporting.

Table 3 Responsibilities of Evaluators

Exercise Stage	Responsibilities
Pre-Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> examine the exercise aim, objectives and exercise control instructions and documents help clarify the objectives and the measures by which they will be assessed identify key and trigger points of the activity develop a data collection plan to enable objective reporting on the performance of capabilities against the stated objectives (through demonstrated performance and evidence)

Exercise Stage	Responsibilities
During the Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gather evidence to be able to demonstrate/report on performance within the specific capability • participate in scheduled meetings/briefings as required • act as a forward observer for EXCON staff to report on activities in real time versus exercise time • where requested and after consultation with EXCON staff, provide inputs into the exercise to help it flow • be contactable • provide feedback to participants and clarifying observations made (e.g. during the debrief) • assess situational awareness of participants • assess flow of information and analyse root cause of problems • consult with other evaluators about the effect of good or poor performance
Post Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • compile and review the data collected • analyse and summarise outcomes • develop an action plan • identify good as well as poor performance • articulate findings in the post-exercise report.

Brief and Train Evaluators

Evaluators must be briefed and may also need to be trained before the exercise. Briefing and training should address all aspects of the exercise, including: the exercise aim and objectives; the scenario; participants; and evaluator roles, responsibilities and assignments. During or before the training, evaluators should be provided with copies of the following materials to review:

- exercise documents, such as the scenario for discussion-based exercises, or the exercise plan, evaluation plan and master schedule of events for functional or field exercises;
- evaluation materials and tools and evaluator assignments;
- appropriate plans, policies, procedures, legislation and agreements of the participating organisations.

Any training provided should also address the roles and responsibilities of evaluators during the various stages of an exercise.

The Exercise Planning Team Leader (or Evaluation Team Leader in a larger exercise) should brief evaluators to ensure they understand their roles, responsibilities and assignments. For functional and field exercises, this briefing often includes a tour of the exercise site so that evaluators become familiar with the venue and know where they should position themselves to best observe activity.

If an evaluator is from another agency or an external organisation, they must be briefed on jurisdictional and agency variations.

Prepare Exercise Planning Documents

Documents that need to be developed when planning an exercise may be just a brief exercise plan for a small exercise, or multiple documents prepared by various sub-teams for a large exercise. In the latter case the exercise plan is the governing document and the planning sub-team has responsibility for coordinating all of the documents.

Types of Documents

The following are the types of documents that may be required for a large exercise and the teams responsible for completing them (Table 4). Templates can be found on the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) page on the [SEMC website](#).

Exercise Plan

An exercise plan sets out the exercise aim (most of which can be taken from the exercise proposal developed in Phase 1). It also builds on the detail of the exercise itself by including information about the exercise and building on the scenario. It will list the governance arrangements including the names of the exercise director and planning team members and include a timeline for activities.



An Exercise Plan template is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 24).

For a small exercise

As the exercise plan may be the only document necessary for a small exercise, it may incorporate some of the other documents such as the evaluation plan.

For a large exercise

The exercise plan is the overriding document for a large exercise, supported by a range of other documents. As well as outlining the key information for the exercise, the exercise plan will list and reference the supporting documents required.

Situation Manual

A situation manual (also known as Sitman) is the core document for discussion exercises and provides the textual background to drive the exercise. The Sitman supports the scenario narrative and is the primary reference material for all participants during the conduct phase.

The Sitman should include:

- An introduction: to provide an overview of the exercise (including scope, objectives and core capabilities, structure, rules and conduct and exercise agenda).
- The scenario: divided into distinct, chronologically sequenced modules that represent a specific time segment of the overall scenario, based on exercise objectives and scenario requirements.
- Discussion questions: for each module, usually divided by organisation or discipline. Responses to the discussion questions are the focus of the exercise, and reviewing them provides the basis for evaluating exercise results. These discussion questions should be derived from the exercise objectives and enable an assessment of the organisation's capability that can be reported in the evaluation documentation.



A Situation Manual template is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 2.5).

Facilitator Guide

A facilitator guide is designed to help a facilitator to manage a discussion-based exercise. It usually outlines instructions and key issues for discussion during the event, and provides background information to help the facilitator answer questions from participants or players. This guide may also include an evaluation or observation methodology to be used, as well as essential materials required to execute their specific functions.



A Facilitator Guide template is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 2.6).

Participant Guide

A participant guide is provided to exercise participants and EXCON staff in advance of the exercise. While all instructions will contain similar information, they may need to be tailored to their respective audiences. They should provide enough information and be accompanied by any pre-reading that the participants or staff members require to take part in the exercise.

The participant guideline may include:

- joining instructions;
- an exercise overview;
- contact information;
- the situation (general idea);
- other relevant information.



A Participant Guide template is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 2.7).

Detailed Scenario Documentation

The type and size of the exercise will influence the required level of scenario documentation.

The various scenario documents provide a detailed plan for how the exercise will unfold, with the master schedule of events as the key document.

Through these documents the special ideas (the specific details used to drive the exercise) will be fed into the exercise. They provide realistic problems, incidents or information for participants to react to as they would in real life. Some special ideas may be provided to participants in advance, while others are released to participants during the exercise.

Scenario documentation includes:

- the master schedule of events;
- exercise control instructions;
- exercise control documents;
- exercise inputs.

Any scenario documentation should be clearly marked as 'exercise material only'.

Master Schedule of Events

The master schedule of events is used to:

- detail the sequence of events, particularly on the day of the exercise;
- indicate the timing of each event;
- identify who is responsible for tasks;
- provide EXCON staff with a 'script';
- provide guidance for the pace and direction of the exercise.

Managing timing is an integral part of the master schedule of events. Some exercises require time to be compressed. For example, a flood discussion exercise might require a period of 48 hours to be compressed into six hours to achieve the outcome required. On the other hand, a field exercise requiring participants to apply practical skills may need to run in real time (or extended time) to meet its objectives. Varying time must be managed carefully given that, for example, compressing time too much can seriously reduce realism.

To be effective, a master schedule of events should contain:

- a serial number to identify each event, activity or input;
- the timing of each event, activity or input;
- the intended responder to event;
- a short summary of the event (scenario information);
- the desired or expected outcome;
- links to relevant exercise control documents (cross referenced by serial number);
- the EXCON member (or functional area) responsible for the input or activity;
- a notes section to record completion time or other instructions.

The complexity of the master schedule of events will depend on the size and scale of the exercise. While a master schedule of events should be prepared for a discussion exercise, it will be a much simpler document.

The Exercise Controller uses the master schedule of events to control the exercise while it is happening. They will ensure any problems are rectified and make alternative arrangements to keep the exercise flowing. The Exercise Controller can modify the flow and progress of the exercise to ensure the objectives are met. This may require a temporary halt to the exercise, changes in its direction or speeding it up or slowing it down.

When developing an exercise, it is important for the planning team to anticipate and analyse the potential range of possible responses to a given activity or input. In some cases, the master schedule of events may need to account for alternative directions the exercise may take depending on the action taken by participants.



A Master Schedule of Events template for small and large exercises is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 2.8 - Small; Template 2.9 - Large).

Exercise Control Instructions

Exercise control instructions are provided for EXCON staff. They provide details surrounding exercise control and conduct including:

- EXCON staff (appointments and responsibilities);
- EXCON facilities;
- exercise briefings;
- time zones;
- communication;
- media and visitors;

- exercise termination and exit strategy;
- exercise facilities (diagrams and equipment details).



An Exercise Control Instruction template is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 2.10).

Exercise Control Documents

Exercise control documents provide any information to participants that may support their decision-making, such as plans, maps and weather forecasts. For example, in a large exercise testing the responsiveness of emergency services to an airplane crash, it could be the number of passengers and detail about the cargo on board the plane, weather conditions, road works information that may affect access or response or other information that responders may request to help them make decisions.

Exercise control documents can also be used to record background information and profiles (such as information on people, businesses or places mentioned in the scenario) that help build context around the exercise.



An Exercise Control Document template is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 2.11).

Exercise Inputs

Exercise inputs are details that will be fed to participants throughout the exercise. These could be details of messages that will be relayed to participants. For example, in a large exercise testing the responsiveness of emergency services to an airplane crash, a message to responders could initiate the exercise.



An Exercise Input template for small and large exercises is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 2.12).

Communication Plans

As part of the exercise planning process a number of communications plans may need to be developed by the planning team. They may include:

Planning Groups Communication Plan

This plan enables effective communication across the planning sub-teams during the planning of the exercise (such as phone numbers and email).

Exercise Communications Plan

The exercise communications plan enables effective communication between EXCON staff, exercise participants and stakeholders (radio channels) during the exercise.

There will normally be two components to this: one for participants and one for EXCON staff.

You need to plan how EXCON staff will contact one another while the exercise is being conducted. This is most commonly achieved by using mobile phones and/or a separate radio network (control network). Normal communication protocols are appropriate for the control network.

It is crucial that exercise staff protocols are identified and agreed to before the day of the exercise and communicated to all members of EXCON prior to the exercise beginning. Ideally there should be a phone network uninterrupted by external calls. Receiving other business calls during an exercise can be extremely distracting and disruptive to the exercise.

You also need to plan how participants will communicate with one another. This is normally on radio channels monitored by exercise staff and other agency personnel. To avoid confusion with real events, exercise messages sent on normal agency communication channels must be prefixed by the word 'exercise'.

In field and functional exercises in particular, maintaining a separate communications network between the participants and EXCON needs to be considered. This provides a platform for the managed introduction of exercise special ideas and/or inputs and also serves as a control mechanism for the exercise controller.

Media Strategy

A media strategy that includes:

- any 'real' public communications required such as a media release to advise residents or businesses that the exercise is occurring;
- any pseudo media strategies required such as a pseudo media release advising the details of the 'emergency' the exercise is enacting.

Evaluation Plan

The evaluation plan outlines what the exercise is evaluating and how it will be evaluated. This includes:

- the exercise outcomes – how the exercise performed against its objectives;
- what was learned – and what could be improved for a future exercise.

An evaluation plan should contain:

- exercise information;
- aim, objectives, scope and focus of the evaluation (these may be different from those of the exercise);
- key evaluation questions;
- methods for data collection and analysis;
- security, safety and ethics;
- risk management strategy;
- evaluator preparation – including training and briefings;
- reporting requirements;
- time frames;
- evaluation tools.



An Evaluation Plan template is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 2.13).

Evaluation Tools

Evaluation tools are used by the exercise evaluators to collect information throughout the conduct phase so they can thoroughly evaluate the exercise. The evaluation tools are prepared during the planning and design phase and may include various documents, checklists and/or templates provided to participants, facilitators, observers or evaluators to collect appropriate information.



Evaluation Data Collection Form (Template 2.14) and Evaluator Aide-Memoire (Template 2.15) templates is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#).

Risk Management Plan

The risk management plan will outline all risks associated with the exercise and the management strategies in place and will include a risk assessment. For a field style exercises a risk assessment may need to be conducted on the exercise site to identify any hazards and develop mitigation strategies and control options to reduce any risks to exercise participants and/or damage to assets.

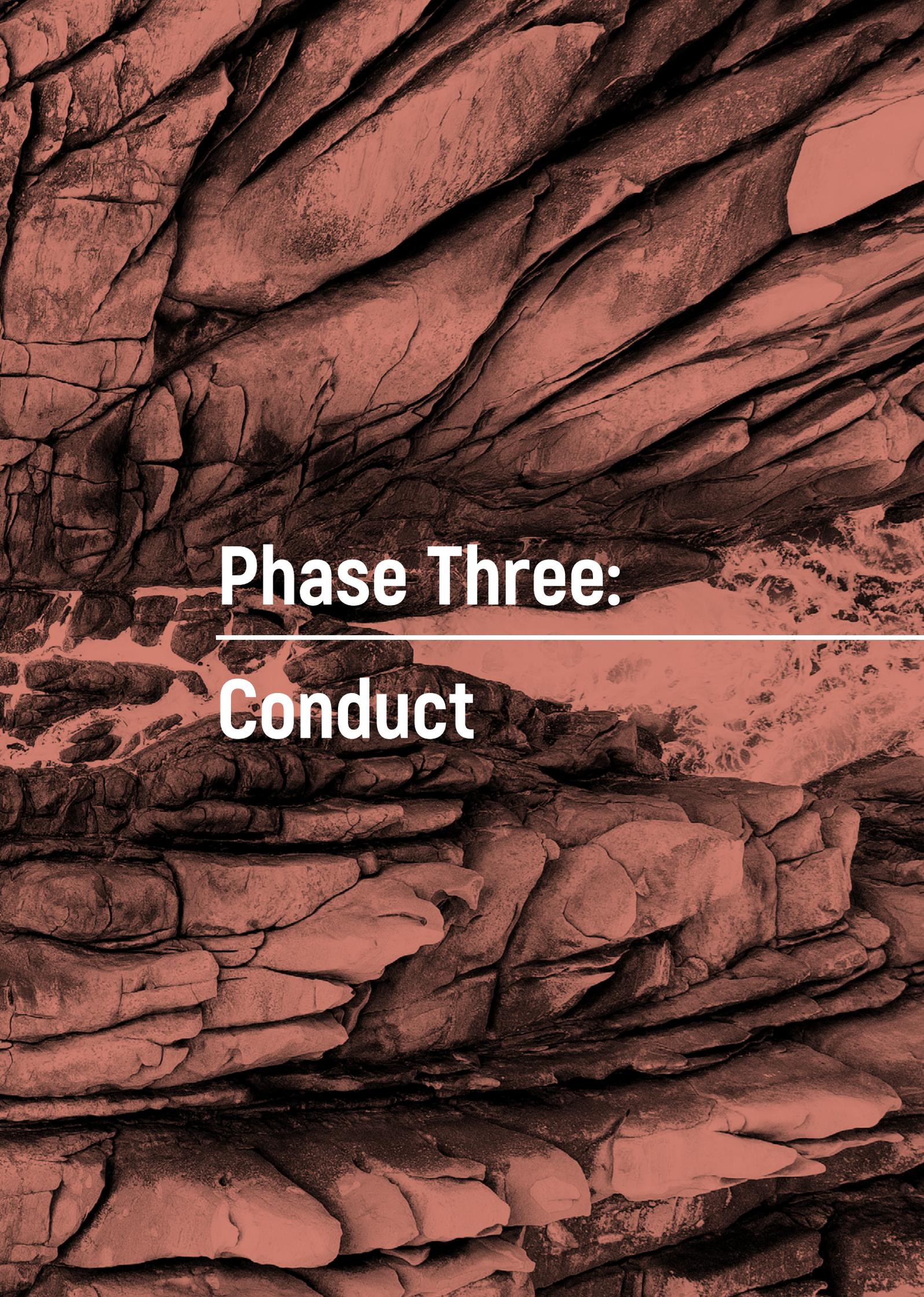


A Risk Assessment template for is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 2.16).

Table 4 Exercise Document Requirements

Type of Document	Required for Discussion Exercise	Required for Functional Exercise	Required for Field Exercise	Distributed to	Prepared by
Exercise Plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	Planners, Directors	Exercise Controller/ Director/ Planning
Situation Manual	Yes	No	No	All	Operations
Facilitator Guide	Yes	No	No	Facilitators	Operations
Participant Guide	No	Yes	Yes	All	Operations
Master Schedule of Events	No	Yes	Yes	EXCON staff, evaluators and role players	Operations
Exercise Control Instructions	No	Yes	Yes	EXCON staff, evaluators and role players	Operations

Type of Document	Required for Discussion Exercise	Required for Functional Exercise	Required for Field Exercise	Distributed to	Prepared by
Exercise Control Documents	No	Yes	Yes	EXCON staff, evaluators and role players	Operations
Exercise Input Documents	Yes	Yes	Yes	EXCON staff, evaluators and role players	Operations
Communication Plans and Supporting Documents	No	Yes	Yes	Media outlets, community and EXCON staff	Planning
Evaluation Plan	Yes	Yes	Yes	EXCON staff and evaluators	Planning
Evaluation Tools	Yes	Yes	Yes	Evaluators	Planning
Risk Management Plan	No	Yes	Yes	All	Safety



Phase Three:

Conduct

In this section you will understand the steps to:

- appoint the EXCON Team
- run pre-exercise activities
- brief participants and stakeholders
- conduct the exercise
- debrief the exercise

Appoint the EXCON Team

The people who run the exercise are known as 'Exercise Control (EXCON) Team'. Their role is to ensure the exercise is conducted in a safe and effective manner.

EXCON staff are drawn from participating agencies and should be identified early so clear lines of command and communication can be established. Early identification of these staff will also enable rehearsal of EXCON functions.

EXCON staff are separate from exercise participants; they should avoid any unnecessary interference and wear clearly identifiable tabards or lanyards during the exercise.

EXCON staff should monitor participants, help create a realistic atmosphere, keep the exercise running smoothly, make rulings for participants, introduce scenario information and guide participants towards achieving the stated objectives.

There are many factors that will determine the number of people, size and extent of the EXCON structure for your exercise.

For a Small Exercise

For small exercises, the EXCON team may be just one person or a small team. An example of a generic exercise control structure, highlighting the functions to be considered (whether by one person or a team), is illustrated in Figure 5.

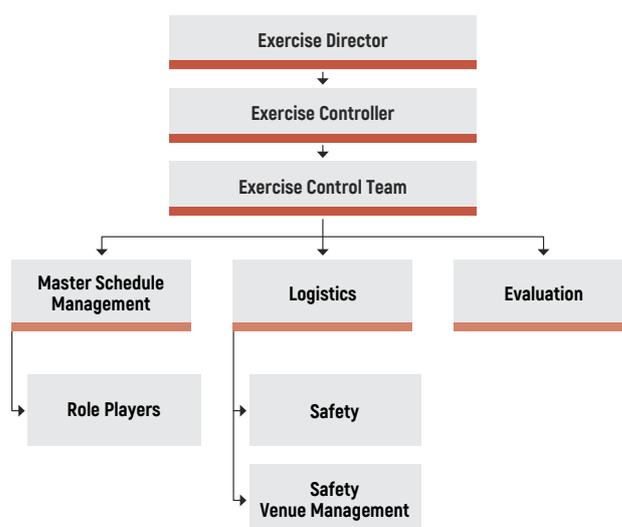


Figure 5 EXCON Structure for a Small Exercise

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For a Large Exercise

For a large exercise, many people may be required to fill the various functions required. An example of a generic exercise control structure for a large exercise is illustrated in Figure 6.

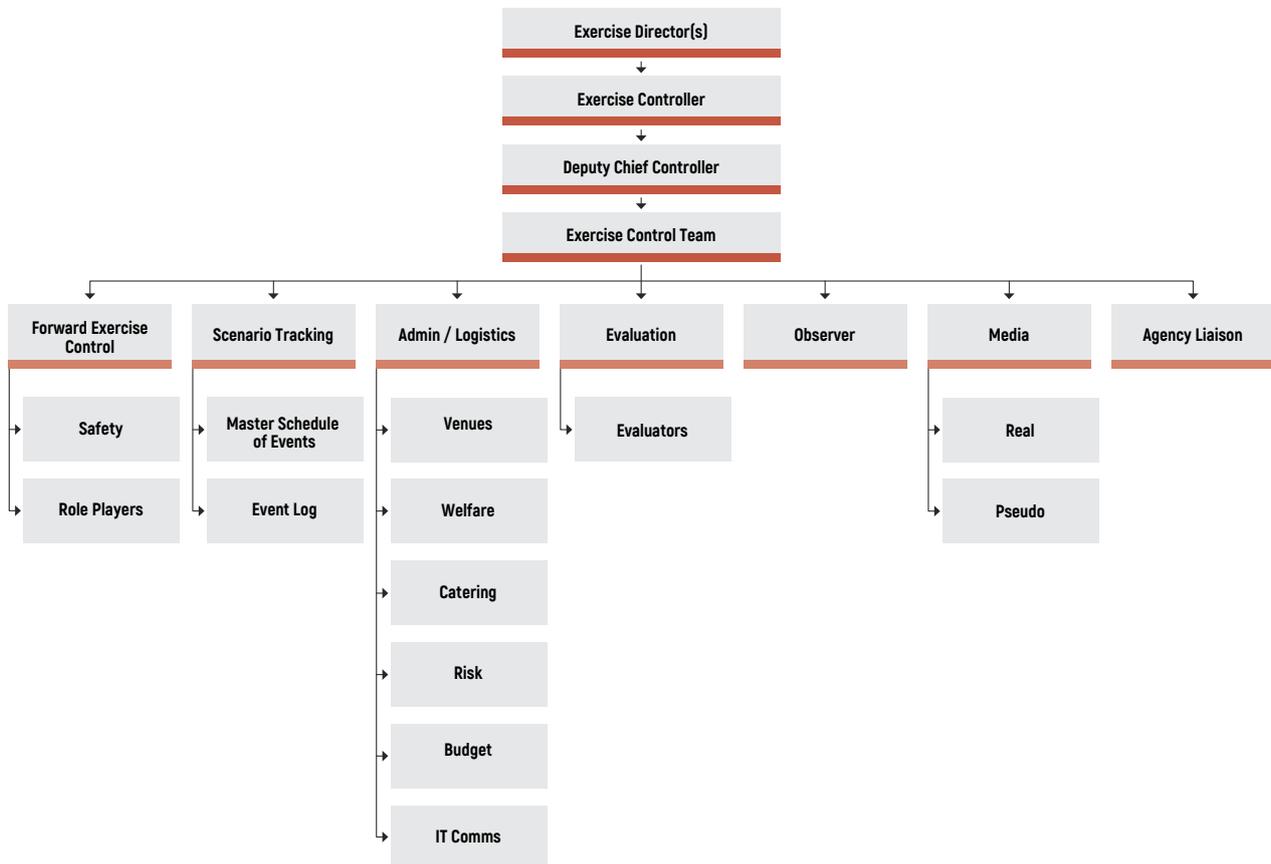


Figure 6 EXCON Structure for a Large Exercise

Note: Print page on A3 to pass print accessibility

Exercise Roles

Exercise Control

The Exercise Director(s) appoints an Exercise Controller who is responsible for selecting and appointing people to the various functions required to conduct the exercise. Larger exercises may have several Exercise Controllers.

The Exercise Controller is responsible for:

- managing all exercise conduct activities to ensure adequate opportunities to achieve the exercise objectives;
- safety and risk management during the conduct phase in accordance with the approved plans.

The Exercise Controller leads the EXCON Team, which is responsible for:

- overseeing the conduct of the exercise;
- ensuring that participants have the opportunity to achieve the aim and objectives;
- managing the master schedule of events;
- simulating activities not performed by the participants;
- contributing to the post-exercise report.

Safety Officer

Safety must take precedence over exercise activities and Safety Officers must intervene immediately if safety is compromised. Depending on the size of the exercise, more than one Safety Officer may be required, in which case they will report to a Chief Safety Officer. Safety Officers should be located in the field so they can monitor activities where they occur.

It is recommended that the EXCON Safety Officer is appointed from members of the Safety Exercise Planning Team.

Scenario Tracking

The Scenario Tracking Team monitors the progress of the master schedule of events and injects scenario information wherever required to progress the exercise. This team may also simulate the roles of organisations that are not participating in the exercise.

Where possible, the EXCON Scenario Tracking Team should contain at least one member appointed from members of the Operations Exercise Planning Team.

Administration/Logistics

An Administration or Logistics Officer may be appointed to coordinate and manage logistic requirements. This role may involve:

- liaising with venue owners or operators;
- coordinating catering requirements;
- arranging transport of personnel and equipment;
- commissioning the construction of props, models or other elements required for the scenario;
- procuring additional equipment, consumables and resources (such as lighting, portable toilets);
- setting up registration or administration areas for exercise control.

The EXCON Logistics Officer should be appointed from members of the Logistics Exercise Planning Team.

Evaluation

The Evaluation Coordinator will manage the evaluators during the conduct of the exercise. This includes ensuring that evaluators are able to move between venues to observe key parts of the scenario and be present at the various debriefs. The Evaluation Coordinator's role continues until the evaluators have submitted their reports at the conclusion of the exercise.

Observer

Exercises may attract observers, ranging from VIPs to members of participating organisations. To ensure observer safety and minimise potential disruption to the exercise, an Observer Coordinator should be appointed to:

- develop an observer program;
- distribute invitations, detailing a meeting time and place on the day, along with an overview of the exercise and arrangements in place on the day;
- thoroughly brief any personnel escorting observers on the exercise scenario, aim and objectives;
- establish an exercise viewing area, if possible, where observers have access to the exercise, but cannot interfere with proceedings and allocate responsibilities to personnel that may include:
 - meeting and escorting observers to predetermined viewing areas;
 - explaining the exercise aim and objectives;
 - providing a running commentary on the exercise;
 - answering observers' questions.

The EXCON Observer Coordinator should be appointed from members of the Logistics Exercise Planning Team.

Media

The EXCON Media Coordinator is responsible for handling any real or pseudo media requirements during the exercise.

Real media responsibilities could include distributing a media release before the exercise begins, coordinating video footage and interviews to promote the exercise in news media, coordinating media attendees on the day and ensuring the media are briefed about the scenario and appropriately positioned at the exercise site.

Pseudo media responsibilities on the day could include producing pseudo media releases about the exercise scenario, testing that appropriate media protocols and processes are in place, dealing with the pseudo media role players and providing a media statement or coordinating media spokespersons.

The EXCON Media Officer should be appointed from members of the Exercise Planning Team.

Agency Liaison

The Agency Liaison Officer is responsible for ensuring all relevant people within the participating agencies have the information they need.

Other Possible Exercise Roles

For very large exercises, it may be necessary to appoint personnel to fill additional roles as outlined below.

Role Player Manager

Role players are integral to the conduct of many field exercises, providing realism and creating an emotional perspective to the activity. They adopt the roles of casualties, victims, bystanders and other people affected during an exercise and are often made up to appear injured (known as moulage). Sometimes role players are also used to act as media representatives or political figures, particularly in field exercises.

However, the success of an exercise can depend on how well role players are briefed and work within the parameters of the exercise, so they must be closely managed.

The Role Player Manager's duties include:

- ensuring role players are registered on arrival. All role players must be registered before they are deployed into the exercise area and then deregistered before leaving the exercise area;
- briefing role players pre-exercise, including details of expected 'role' behaviour and possible reactions during the exercise;
- coordinating moulage (simulating injuries with make-up);
- positioning the role players pre-exercise;
- managing role player welfare (including hydration, shade, warmth, sunscreen) during the exercise;
- arranging for debriefing and deregistration of role players when the exercise concludes. A formal debriefing for role players provides them with a vital forum to share their experiences of the exercise and will provide unique insight into how responders dealt with the situation;
- thanking role players for participating;
- facilitating role players to de-role following an exercise. They may need to go through a process of 'stepping out of character' to minimise any unexpected psychological effects. This can occur naturally as part of the exercise debrief or may require a conscious activity where the role player has been in-role for some time or the role has been particularly demanding.

Staging Area Manager

The Staging Area Manager manages deployment of participants from a predetermined staging area during field exercises.

Security Manager

Exercises may need to be cordoned off from the public. Equipment, props and other resources may also need to be protected. A security manager may be appointed to:

- manage site access;
- coordinate protection of physical assets;
- establish perimeters;
- prevent unauthorised filming and photography and the disclosure of operational procedures.

Damage Control Officer

The Damage Control Officer is responsible for assessing, recording and reporting on any damage caused during the exercise. In some instances, damage may need to be repaired and the venue/site returned to pre-exercise conditions. The Damage Control Officer should ensure that pre- and post-exercise venue inspections are completed.

Information Technology and Communications Support Manager

The Information Technology and Communications Support Manager manages systems used during the exercise.

Run Pre-Exercise Activities

Pre-exercise activities prepare agencies and individuals for their participation in the exercise and may include:

- notifying:
 - agency staff;
 - political representatives;
 - senior officials;
 - the community;
 - media;
- rehearsals or training;
- a final review of exercise documentation;
- a final check of technology and communication requirements;
- establishing facilities;
- familiarising people with equipment;
- discussion exercise(s), seminar(s) and/or workshops;
- developing or reviewing plans and procedures.

Brief Participants and Stakeholders

For the best opportunity to achieve the exercise objectives, it is essential to conduct briefings with participants, role players, EXCON, evaluators and observers.

Style of Briefings

All exercise briefings should follow a consistent format for ease of understanding and support any instructions people have received prior to the exercise.

Briefings should be accurate, concise and sequential. Many emergency management agencies use the SMEACSQ format, which is recommended because it presents the important information in a logical sequence:

Table 5 Briefing Styles and Details

Briefing Style	Details
Situation	Describes what has happened and perhaps what has been done.
Mission	Describes what is to be achieved (aim, objectives).
Execution	Describes how objectives are to be achieved: what needs to be done, not how to do it.
Administration and Logistics	Describes administrative and logistical arrangements (such as transport, catering).
Command and Communication	Describes command structure and communication arrangements for the exercise.
Safety	Includes information relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • site-specific considerations (such as hazards, out of bounds areas); • 'No Duff' arrangements; • identifying, managing and reporting hazards; • the process for reporting any injuries incurred during the exercise; • monitoring environmental conditions; • monitoring participant welfare throughout the exercise (including stress-related health issues).
Questions	Provides the opportunity for participants to ask questions.

No Duff

If an authentic injury or incident occurs, all messages relating to it must be prefixed by the phrase 'No Duff'. Should such an event occur, the safety officer, in consultation with the exercise controller, may pause or stop the exercise to manage the real event.

Key Areas to Brief

Briefings should be arranged for all key role areas:

EXCON staff

Briefing EXCON staff is essential to allow them to clarify their roles during the exercise and ensure they understand the scenario and how it will unfold. In some cases it may be appropriate to conduct a rehearsal with EXCON staff to confirm timings and familiarise them with the exercise environment.

Exercise briefings usually include details relating to the general idea, special ideas, master schedule of events, safety instructions and amplify information contained in the exercise plan. The EXCON briefing should include the:

- exercise aim and objectives;
- key aspects of the exercise scenario;

- roles and responsibilities of EXCON staff;
- communications plan (including organisational structure);
- information, communication and technology systems;
- intervention strategies (circumstances under which EXCON will intervene and re-guide participants);
- actions in the event of unforeseen circumstances;
- post-exercise requirements.

Individual staff may receive separate instructions tailored for their specific function, such as:

- site-staging instructions;
- arrangements for media and visitors;
- damage control;
- specific safety instructions.

Observers

Observers should be briefed on any restrictions placed on them and reminded that they are only observing the exercise and should not provide input at any time, other than in the case of a safety issue.

Role players

It is essential that role players are fully briefed on their involvement before the exercise begins, particularly on use of the term 'No Duff' in the case of a real injury or incident.

Role players should be informed that they may withdraw from the exercise if they feel unsafe, unwell or anxious about events. The role player briefing should include information about the withdrawal process.

Participants

Briefing participants will allow them to fully engage in the exercise. This briefing should include:

- exercise aim and objectives;
- evaluation focus and expectations;
- roles and responsibilities during the exercise;
- exercise scope and rules;
- information, communication and technology systems;
- actions in the event of unforeseen circumstances;
- 'No Duff' arrangements in the case of a real injury or incident;
- post-exercise arrangements;
- safety.

Evaluators

In addition to a general briefing on the exercise aim and objectives, evaluators need to understand their role as articulated in the exercise evaluation plan including:

- observing participants' responses and recording their observations;
- observing and assessing processes, procedures and techniques;
- evaluating and reporting on the achievement of exercise objectives.

For more information on what may need to be included in an evaluator's briefing of particular styles of exercise, see the Phase 3 - Evaluating During the Exercise.



A Exercise Evaluator Briefing template is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 3.1).

Media

Any media attending need to be briefed about the exercise, including any access issues or restrictions on information to be published.

Conduct the Exercise

Starting the Exercise

For the exercise to start effectively, several activities need to be completed just before the scheduled start time. These may include:

- a final test of information, communication and technology systems;
- a last-minute briefing for all exercise staff, confirming readiness to proceed;
- positioning of simulated casualties, props and special effects;
- positioning of EXCON staff and support personnel;
- positioning of exercise participants;
- advice to the Exercise Controller that all is ready.

An exercise can start in many ways, all of which must be coordinated by the Exercise Controller.

Discussion exercises usually begin with the facilitator introducing the subject to the participants.

Functional exercises may start with an incoming message or a written script that introduces the first piece of scenario information.

Field exercises begin via a radio or telephone message communicating that an incident has taken place, followed by some type of response by a participating agency.

Running the exercise

If an exercise has been well planned, running it is then a matter of running it according to the plan.

EXCON staff manage the exercise in accordance with the master schedule of events and all other exercise documentation.

Throughout the exercise, the Exercise Controller can call a temporary halt to change the exercise direction, speed it up or slow it down to ensure the exercise objectives can be achieved.

EXCON staff support the Exercise Controller by ensuring all is proceeding well at each location and that appropriate inputs occur in accordance with the master schedule of events.

EXCON staff need to be prepared to react to participant responses and take appropriate action.

The EXCON Team should conduct regular briefings during the exercise to ensure effective management, to maintain momentum and achieve the objectives. By maintaining communication in this way, EXCON maintains control and an overview of exercise activities. Situational awareness may be also be achieved by:

- monitoring the actions of participants and role players;
- using audio/video and/or other information technology aids;
- receiving field reports from EXCON staff.

During conduct, EXCON staff may:

- pause and guide (if participants and exercise activities are moving away from the objectives);
- stop, debrief and reset (if exercise activities move well outside the intended objectives);
- stop the exercise (in the event of a major safety issue);
- let mistakes run to see if the participants can overcome barriers to the achievement of the objectives;
- let perceived mistakes run to see if the participants develop a new method for achieving the objectives.

Managing Exercise Conduct Issues

Identification of exercise staff

In all exercises, the proper identification and roles of exercise staff is essential. This serves to differentiate them from participants and role players and, in large multi-agency exercises, to identify particular roles. This is normally achieved through the use of tabards, lanyards, name plates or arm bands depicting role title (e.g. Safety Officer).

The following coloured lanyards are generally used to identify exercise control members, evaluators, media, role players and observers (Table 6):

Table 5 Exercise Staff Colour Identification

Exercise Role	Colour
Exercise Control	Yellow
Evaluators	Blue
Media	Purple
Role Players	Black
Observers	Red

Managing Real Events

The term 'No Duff' should be used to indicate that a real event or injury has taken place. It will then be the decision of the Exercise Controller as to whether the exercise needs to pause or stop.

Evaluating During the Exercise

During the exercise, the evaluators will be observing and evaluating the exercise and collecting data as outlined in the evaluation plan. The way they observe and collect data may differ between discussion and functional/field exercises.

Discussion exercises

Discussion exercises tend to focus on higher-level issues involving the plans, policies and procedures of an organisation/jurisdiction. As such, many discussion exercises break participants into syndicate groups to facilitate smaller group discussions. In these smaller group discussions, evaluators and/or scribes may record proceedings and capture observations and outcomes.

After the syndicate groups have finished their discussions, the entire group usually reconvenes to address any multi-agency issues or conflicting opinions. Although individual evaluators are assigned to record discussions within a designated group, all evaluators should capture the information aired in this open discussion.

A debrief with the Exercise Planning Team, facilitators and evaluators should be held immediately afterwards to collect observations and thoughts about the exercise conduct. This will provide an opportunity for evaluators to clarify any points.

Following the exercise, evaluators may also supplement the data collected during the discussions by collecting additional data from participants through interviews or questionnaires.

Functional and field exercises

Evaluation of functional or field exercises requires evaluators to observe activities where they are occurring. After an exercise, the information recorded by evaluators is used to analyse whether or not the activities and tasks were successfully performed and the objectives achieved.

During exercises, evaluators need to keep accurate records of their observations. Evaluators should take detailed notes as well as consider other means of recording data, such as the use of personal recording devices. Any electronic recording of exercises should be in accordance with the policies/procedures of the participating organisations.

Because numerous exercise activities may occur simultaneously, evaluators need to plan to be in place to observe those activities most relevant to the objectives they are evaluating.

Some examples of evaluators' observations include:

- any deviations from plans or procedures;
- timeliness of response/completion of tasks;
- effectiveness of, or shortcomings in, command and control;
- processes and arrangements that work well and should be maintained and/or enhanced;
- creative, adaptive problem-solving;
- equipment issues that affect participant efforts;
- exercise management issues that affect the ability of participants to achieve objectives.

Evaluators should not interfere with or disrupt the conduct of the exercise. However, it may be necessary for an evaluator to interact with participants during the exercise if he or she has a question about something observed. These questions should not influence the manner in which participants respond to the scenario and should be as brief as possible.

When making observations, evaluators consider key performance indicators aligned to the capability-based objectives.

Collecting supplementary data

The evaluation team may wish to collect additional data immediately after the exercise. For example, useful sources of information could include participants/observer observations, logs, message forms and maps. These records can help evaluators validate their observations and identify the effect of inaccurate information on performance.

Evaluator report

You may require individual evaluators to develop an evaluator report summarising their observations and outcomes of any debriefs they are involved in to provide to the author of the final evaluation report.

The author(s) of the evaluator report will be determined by the Exercise Director(s) and will include input from the Evaluation Team. The evaluator report should include:

- a description of the exercise;
- a narrative of key events;
- an evaluation summary addressing the attainment of the exercise aim, objectives and standards;
- key observations and insights.

NOTE: The development of lessons identified should be led by the responsible agency involved. These actions should be captured with the post-exercise report, as further described in Phase 4 - Evaluate. The Planning Team and evaluators should continue to contribute to the identification of lessons.



An Evaluators Report template is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 3.2).

Finishing the Exercise – ENDEX

Finishing the exercise is a controlled activity. The Exercise Controller is responsible for finishing the exercise in a pre-arranged manner and communicating an appropriate message to all participants. An accepted term for concluding the exercise is 'ENDEX'.

The exercise may end in accordance with:

- a designated time, according to the master schedule of events;
- achievement of all objectives;
- completion of designated tasks;
- it not being safe to continue with the exercise;
- other activities (including a safety breach or actual responses) hindering the progress of the exercise or render the objectives unachievable.

In any case, the Exercise Controller must consider strategies, should it be necessary, to terminate the exercise before the pre-arranged time.

During a field exercise, a progressive stand-down of agencies/capabilities can begin when they have achieved their respective objectives, as long as it does not affect the continuing functions of other participants and has been approved by the Exercise Controller. It is important not to overlook the activities required to repatriate the exercise site and return equipment to its pre-exercise state. While this will largely be the responsibility of logistics, the time and effort required should not be underestimated and the staff involved must be given every opportunity to participate in designated post-exercise activities.

Debriefing the Exercise

An immediate or 'hot' debrief should be conducted at the end of an activity or at the end of the whole exercise. It should be provided for all participants and staff to capture information and feedback while it is still fresh in people's minds. This debrief is normally conducted by the team leader or supervisor of a functional area to help identify issues or concerns.

A hot debrief enables all participants to gain insight into how the exercise was conducted and how their role may have influenced its conduct.

The hot debrief should include:

- what worked well;
- what didn't work well;
- safety issues;
- what, if any, immediate action is required.

It may not be possible to capture the responses of all participants in a face-to-face forum. Consider developing a participant survey that can be completed remotely and collated as part of exercise evaluation.



A Participant Evaluation Questionnaire template is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 3.).



Phase 4:

Evaluate

In this section you will understand the steps to:

- review the evaluation data
- hold a formal evaluation meeting
- develop a post-exercise report
- develop an action plan for lessons identified
- communicate summary of findings

An important note about evaluation

While a formal evaluation is the final phase of an exercise, planning your evaluation starts at the beginning. It is assumed that, before beginning your formal evaluation, you have taken steps to plan your evaluation as outlined throughout this guideline.

If you have not already read it, you should consider the following information already provided in this guideline about evaluation:

- Evaluation Strategy and Reporting Schedule in Phase 1 – Concept
- Plan Your Exercise Evaluation in Phase 2 – Plan
- Evaluation Plan in the Phase 2 – Plan: Prepare Exercise Planning Documents
- Evaluating During the Exercise in Phase 3 – Conduct: Conduct the Exercise

The information in this section (Phase 4 - Evaluate) will help you finalise your evaluation and ensure your findings and conclusions can contribute to your organisation's ongoing learnings.

Review the Evaluation Data

Your formal exercise evaluation will be informed by:

- outputs from the exercise planning process and planning meetings;
- observations from exercise staff;
- outputs from the exercise debriefs;
- observations and reports from the exercise evaluator(s).

Reviewing this data and evaluating your exercise enable critical information to be collated and lessons learned to be documented so others can learn from them in the future.

Hold a Post-Exercise Evaluation Meeting

A formal post-exercise evaluation meeting provides an opportunity for key agency representatives and exercise staff to formally debrief and highlight areas of concern and positive outcomes.

For a large exercise, this meeting is led by an experienced facilitator and should focus on strategic multi-agency aspects of the exercise that may require further discussion and clarification and possibly recommend future actions. For a smaller exercise, it may be just a meeting of a few key people.

Participants' contributions can be verbal or written. In either case, information collected at formal debriefings must be recorded so it can be used in the post-exercise report.

As with briefings, a standard format for debriefings should be adopted and an agenda distributed and followed.

At the start, the facilitator should clearly state the aim and objectives of the debrief. Issues that may be covered in a formal exercise debrief include:

- the aims and objectives of the exercise;
- analyse the exercise to determine what worked well, what didn't work well and areas for improvement without apportioning blame;
- address specific questions that arise from the achievement or non-achievement of objectives;
- acknowledge good performance;
- seek constructive information;
- focus on improving procedures and training;
- explore the appropriateness and effectiveness of the exercise;
- record relevant information to enable compilation of reports;
- summarise major points and suggest follow-up actions.



A Post Exercises Evaluation Meeting template for small and large exercises is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 4.1).

Develop a Post-Exercise Report

The information gathered during the evaluation process is collated in a post-exercise report. Even the smallest of exercises should have a post-exercise report.

The information in this report can be used to:

- establish how any specific corrective actions or recommended treatment options will be undertaken (such as delegating actions or seeking advice from subject matter experts);
- identify and act on any capability gaps identified;
- seek approval from agency management on the implementation of treatment options and task and track proposed treatment options;
- inform the SECT about exercise outcomes and treatment option data including timelines and plans (this is done by the Exercise Director through the agency representative). Exercise data can then be used by the SECT to identify trends and future planning;

- gain commitment from agency management to implement treatment options within specified timeframes;
- ensure ongoing accountability for action.

Exercise data collated through the evaluation process can also be used to identify trends and any future planning needs.

The exercise evaluation should report on exercise outcomes (performance against exercise objectives).

To achieve this, the post-exercise report should attempt to answer the following questions:

- What did we plan to do (what were the objectives)?
- What did we achieve – how did this differ from what was planned (were objectives met and, if not, how did the outcomes differ)?
- Why did it happen (what led to the objective(s) being achieved/not being achieved as planned)? Significant observations and insights should be included.
- What can be done in the future (what improvements need to be made; what processes need to be sustained)? Lessons identified for action should be included.
- What was learned (what previously identified lessons have been assessed as embedded into current practice; has capability improved due to a change in policy/process/procedural/capacity)? If applicable, lessons learned should be included.

Outcomes from an exercise should contribute to an organisation's learning and continuous improvement.

Evaluation methods are not designed solely for use during exercises; they are also transferable to real-time operations and other activities (e.g. training, performance reviews). While real-time operations will not be structured and pre-planned as exercises (particularly in terms of the scripting aspect), the design of objectives for the evaluation can be modified to reflect the active, operational situation and gather lessons from the real-time deployment of capabilities. These types of lessons are an indispensable input to the development of any capability.

The outcomes from one exercise may not be appropriate to all situations and therefore any actions needs to be carefully considered.

Lessons Identified

Your post-exercise report will identify what was learned from the exercise and what the gaps are in your organisation's capability that may be used to drive future action. An action plan should detail what actions will be taken as a result of the exercise outcomes and insights, allocate responsibility and timeframes for completion.



A Post Exercises Report template for small and large exercises is provided in the [Exercise Templates and Resources](#) section on the [SEMC website](#) (Template 4.2).

Communicate Findings

While the post-exercise report will be submitted to the SECT, it is important that the findings of the exercise are also communicated to relevant staff and stakeholders. This could be in the form of an email, memo or article in a staff/stakeholder magazine. For larger exercises it may be appropriate to issue a media release.

Any external communications should consider the sensitivity of the information to be released and for particularly sensitive exercises a communication strategy should be developed and signed off by agency management.

The critical thing is that key people within your organisation know that the exercise occurred and that they should review your post-exercise report prior to undertaking any similar exercise in the future.



Templates

All of the editable templates listed below and detailed examples of some of these documents can be found in the WA Managing Exercises Templates and Resources section on the SEMC website.

Table 6 Table of Templates

Template Number	Template Title	Phase
Template 1.1	Concept Development Meeting Agenda	Concept
Template 1.2	Exercise Proposal	Concept
Template 2.1	Initial Planning Meeting Agenda	Planning
Template 2.2	Mid Planning Meeting Agenda	Planning
Template 2.3	Final Planning Meeting Agenda	Planning
Template 2.4	Exercise Plan	Planning
Template 2.5	Situation Manual	Planning
Template 2.6	Facilitator Guide	Planning
Template 2.7	Participant Guide	Planning
Template 2.8	Master Schedule of Events - Small Exercises	Planning
Template 2.9	Master Schedule of Events - Large Exercises	Planning
Template 2.10	Exercise Control Instructions	Planning
Template 2.11	Exercise Control Document	Planning
Template 2.12	Exercise Input	Planning
Template 2.13	Evaluation Plan	Planning
Template 2.14	Evaluation Data Collection Form	Planning
Template 2.15	Exercise Evaluator Aide-Memoire	Planning
Template 2.16	Risk Assessment	Planning
Template 3.1	Exercise Evaluator Briefing	Conduct
Template 3.2	Evaluator Report	Conduct
Template 3.3	Participant Evaluation Questionnaire	Conduct
Template 4.1	Post Exercise Evaluation Meeting	Evaluate
Template 4.2	Post Exercise Report	Evaluate

