

Tabletop Exercise

SEVERE WINTER STORM



Agenda

- Introductions
- Exercise Continuum
- Today's Tabletop Scenario
- Discussions
- Hot Wash (Debrief)
- Action Planning
- Closure



Rules of the Road

- Creativity/Group Problem Solving
- Use the knowledge and information available in the room
- Active Thinking
- Active Listening
- Active Participation
- Respect – challenge ideas, not people
- Reality Check – make the exercise real for you.



Introductions



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The Exercise Continuum

Briefly:

- Drills
- **Tabletop Exercises**
- Functional Exercises
- Full-Scale Exercises



Tabletop Exercises

- Simulate an emergency situation in an informal, stress-free environment.
- Initiate discussion of emergency guidelines.
- Focus on training and familiarization with roles, guidelines, and responsibilities.



How a Tabletop Works

- A scenario-based discussion is guided by a facilitator;
- Problems talked through without stress;
- Observe offer feedback on the proceedings
- Policies, procedures, plans, and guidelines are discussed and updated.



Tabletop Success

Participants leave with:

- A positive learning experience
- Organizational learning
- Improvement action planning
- More effective policies, plans, and guidelines
- Improved preparedness



Exercise Guidelines

- This exercise is designed to test the preparedness of the district/school to respond to a multi-agency, multi-site emergency event.
- Following the exercise, there will be a debriefing time, aka a “Hot Wash”.
- Each participant will be given the opportunity to share his/her views on what worked well and what needs to be addressed in additional planning, training and/or drilling



Guidelines (Continued)

- LEA policies and existing safety plan(s) govern all activities relating to the emergency event.
- The facilitator will serve as the exercise referee and provide any official interpretation of the exercise rules.
- From time to time, there will be *injections* into the scenario. These are intended to further assess response to the exercise scenario.

This is designed to be a learning experience for all.



Purpose

- To examine current policies, procedures, resources and actions in the context to a response to an earthquake in a district/school setting
- To promote greater understanding and ability to apply NIMS/ICS principles to your setting
- To make improvements as identified as an outcome of the exercise



Objectives

- To evaluate policies and procedures... your plan
- To evaluate command and control including communications procedures
- To identify resources needed vs. available
- To identify training needs
- To identify needed improvements and create an action plan to address those needs



Situation Demographics

Overview:

For today's exercise, your LEA/school has:

- Number of schools/facilities
- Types of schools/facilities
- Athletic facilities
- Student population
- Employee population



First Responder Resource Overview

The first responder resources immediately available to your school, include but are not limited to:

- Police
- Fire
- EMS



Risk Assessment

Overview:

Known threats and hazards to your district and school:

- Natural _____
- Biological _____
- Technological _____
- Adversarial/Human _____





WINTER STORM

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Scenario

The Day Before

Late Monday evening, the media issue this warning:

"An ice storm warning means severe winter weather conditions are imminent or occurring. Significant amounts of ice accumulations will make travel dangerous or impossible.

Travel is strongly discouraged. If you must travel keep an extra flashlight, food and water in your vehicle in case of an emergency.

Ice accumulations may lead to snapped power lines and falling tree branches that add to the danger."



Scenario

The Start

- The night and early morning are quite, but cold. Your Tuesday school day begins normally.
- Around 9:30-9:45 a.m. on Tuesday morning, snow flurries begin. The students are excited! They love snow.
- You hear from the National Weather Service that this is a fast moving storm coming quickly out of the Fraser River Valley.



Questions

Based on this much information,

- What are your immediate concerns?
- What initial actions should you take?
- What have you done to this point?
- What should you do next?
- What do you need to know?
- How do you find the information?
- Who do you contact?



Inject #1

1:00 p.m.

- By now, this has become a major wind and freezing rain storm.
- Winds are reaching 75-80mph.
- The snow continues to fall; temperatures drop to 20 degrees.
- The snow is turning into freezing rain. The snow and freezing rain has made travel treacherous in most areas.
- Your power fluctuates. You hear that there are already some places in the area are actually without power.



Questions

- What does your EOP/Safety Plan call for?
- What are you going to do?
What actions will you take?
- Do you need to activate your school incident command at this point?
- What is your ICS structure?



Questions

ICS Structure

- Who is the Incident Commander?
- Who is the Public Information Officer?
- Who is the Liaison Officer?
- Who is the Operations Chief?
- What other ICS positions will you activate and who will fill them?



Inject #2

2:30 p.m.

- By now, there are 3-4 inches of snow and ice in most places.
- The snow and freezing rain continue.
- With the weight of the snow and ice, trees and branches are already breaking and falling around campus.
- You can see some across power lines and roads.
You know that it is all but impossible for your buses to run.
- The news reports that trees and limbs continue to break and damaging power lines, resulting in power outages.
- You still have power, but you are not sure how much longer it will be on.
- Due to power outages and downed cables, internet service is seriously degraded and intermittent at best.



Inject #2

2:30

- Cell service is still functional but spotty.
- You have gotten frantic calls from a few families which were able to get through.
- Some parents have managed to get to school to pick up their children.
- The only way that they can leave is to walk through the storm.
- You realize that your students and staff are very likely going to have to stay at school for the duration of the storm.



Questions

- What actions should you take based on this realization?
- How will you tell those parents who came to school?
How will you notify others?
What will you tell them?
- Does your safety plan have contingencies for such a situation?



Questions

- How have you prepared for the extended time period for sheltering students and staff?
- What should you do about the special needs children and those who are feeling sick?
- What should you do about the parents who want to walk *additional* children home?



Inject #3

6:00 p.m.

- The area weather remains cold with lows in the teens and 20s.
- The National Weather Service predicts more snowfall through the night and into Wednesday .
- You can expect at least 6-8 more inches of snow on top of the 10 or so which has fallen during the day.
- The storm moved so fast and did so much damage so quickly that the Governor has already issued a Proclamation of Emergency.



Inject #3

6:30 p.m.

- By 6:30, your power is now out. It will remain out for 2 more days.



Questions

- What actions should school personnel take based on the information from the NWS?
- Knowing that you will have students, staff and potentially parents, what is your back-up plan?
- What do you do about staff who want to leave to be with their own families?
- Will you need to make additional ICS assignments?



Questions

- When possible, how will you ensure that everyone (including students, parents, and staff) is accounted for?
- What is your reunification plan?
- What further actions will you take?
- What additional contingencies must you now prepare for?
- Will you need to address long-term recovery?





TAKE A
DEEP
BREATH
THEN
CONTINUE

...



Hot Wash



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Hot Wash

- How well did your EOP/Safety Plan operate and what actions will you take toward improvement?
- How well did your ICS Team operate and what actions will you take toward improvement?
- How well did your Communications Plan operate and what actions will you take toward improvement?



Hot Wash

- What can be done to improve school safety & security operations?
- What internal district-level offices were required to work together in this scenario?
- What external agencies did the Liaison Officer need to work with in this scenario?
- Are all necessary agreements in place to facilitate cooperation among agencies?



After Action Plan

- Lessons Learned:

For an improved action plan, consider what you will:

- Keep Doing _____
- Stop Doing _____
- Do Differently _____
- Start Doing _____



Conclusion

- What is your biggest take away today?





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