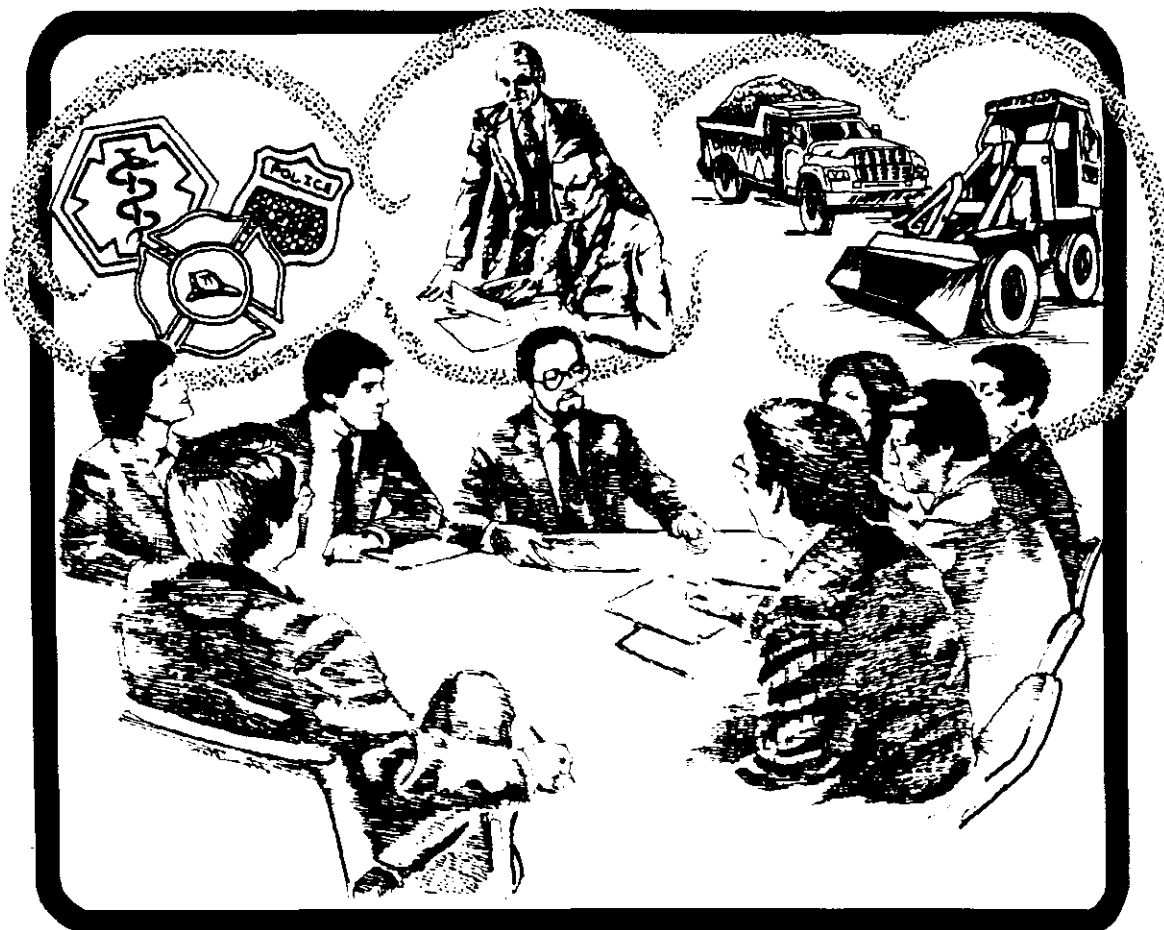


School Crisis Management Exercise Development Guide



Developed by Virginia Department of Emergency Management

July 2001

📖 **TABLE OF CONTENTS** 📖

	PAGES
◆ Introduction And Purpose	1
◆ Glossary	2
◆ Planning Steps Checklist.....	4
◆ Step/Worksheet 1	5
◆ Step/Worksheet 2	9
◆ Step/Worksheet 3	10
◆ Step/Worksheet 4.....	11
◆ Step/Worksheet 5	12
◆ Step/Worksheet 6.....	15
◆ Step/Worksheet 7	16
◆ Step/Worksheet 8.....	17

INTRODUCTION

Experience and data show that exercises are the most practical, efficient, and cost effective way to prepare for disasters and crises. The aim for any school should be to develop a progressive exercise program, a long-term approach in which exercises are planned, conducted, and evaluated as building blocks to competency in crisis management. There are two principal benefits of such a program. First, people practice their role and gain proficiency in the crisis management plan. Second, the coordination among schools and local emergency response agencies is improved. These benefits arise not from exercising alone, but from evaluating the exercise and acting upon those results. An exercise has value only when it leads to individual and/or collective improvement.

PURPOSE

This **Exercise Development Guide** has been developed by the Training and Resource Branch of the Virginia Department of Emergency Management to complement the Model School Crisis Management Plan. It is intended as a reference tool to assist in exercise planning for those with some knowledge and experience in the design and evaluation process. This Guide is based on a **planning checklist** that addresses the eight steps in exercise design as well as other key points in the preparation and evaluation of any exercise. This guide works through each step in the exercise design process utilizing one or more worksheets for each step in the process.



GLOSSARY

Progressive Exercise Program

A commitment from the school and community agencies to plan and conduct increasingly more challenging exercises over a period of time, to achieve and maintain competency in executing the school crisis management plan.

Exercise

An activity designed to: promote emergency preparedness; test or evaluate emergency operations, policies, plans, procedures or facilities, train personnel in emergency duties, and demonstrate operational capabilities.

Orientation Seminar

An informal discussion designed to familiarize participants with roles, plans, procedures, and resolve questions of coordination and assignment of responsibilities.

Drill

Supervised activities that test, develop, or maintain skills in a single response procedure (such as: communications, notification, lockdown, fire) and the possible/probable interaction with local government agency functions (such as: incident command posts, rescue squad entry, police perimeter control) which will involve actual field response. Helps prepare for more complex exercises in which several functions are coordinated and tested.

Tabletop Exercise

Simulates an emergency situation in an informal, stress-free environment. Designed to elicit discussion as participants examine and resolve problems based on existing crisis management plans.

Functional Exercise

A fully simulated interactive exercise; tests one or more functions in a time-pressured realistic simulation; focuses on policies, procedures, roles, and responsibilities.

Full-Scale Exercise

Evaluates the operational capability of emergency response management systems in an interactive manner. Includes the mobilization of emergency personnel and resources required to demonstrate coordination and response capability. Tests total response capability as close to a real emergency as possible.

Statement of Purpose

Defines the reason why an exercise needs to be conducted. Includes the functions to be tested, the personnel and agencies involved, and the type of threat to be simulated.

Objective

A goal expressed in simple, clear, specific, and measurable terms. Serves as the foundation of all exercise planning.

Narrative

A word picture that includes all essential elements of information concerning the incident used to initiate an exercise.

Scenario

The overall outline of how an exercise will be conducted. Includes the narrative, major/detailed sequence of events, problems or messages, and expected actions. Often used interchangeably with the term narrative.

EXERCISE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING STEPS – CHECKLIST

(Page numbers refer to additional information in this guide)

1. **Assess Training Needs** (Pages 5 – 8)
 - ◇ Analyze the threats and hazards
 - ◇ Determine the suitable exercise types
 - ◇ Assess capability
 - ◇ Conduct pre-exercise drills or rehearsals
2. **Define the Scope** (Page 9)
3. **Write a Statement of Purpose** (Pages 9 and 10)
 - ◇ Prepare pre-exercise notification
 - ◇ Obtain support of your school superintendent, staff, parents, and students
 - ◇ Coordinate with participating personnel and organizations
 - ◇ Schedule the exercise and develop planning milestones
 - ◇ Coordinate logistics – facilities, equipment, and support.
 - ◇ Organize design and evaluation teams
 - ◇ Coordinate orientations and/or training
4. **Define Exercise Objectives** (Pages 10 and 11)
5. **Compose a Narrative** (Pages 12-14)
6. **Write Major and Detailed Events** (Page 15)
 - ◇ Plan exercise enhancements or props – maps, props, color cards, computers, radios, etc.
 - ◇ Prepare evaluation plan and checklists
 - ◇ Nominate an evaluation team to determine how objectives will be evaluated and actions by participants will be monitored and measured against plans and procedures
7. **Identify Expected Actions** (Pages 11, 15, & 16)
8. **Prepare Messages/Problems** (Pages 16-18)
 - ◇ Conduct pre-exercise briefings
 - ◇ Plan post exercise actions
 - Post Exercise Meetings and After Action Reviews
 - Identification of additional training/drills
 - Final exercise report/after action report

EXERCISE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET #1a

THREAT/HAZARD ANALYSIS

1. What are the highest priority natural, technological, or man-made hazards or threats to your school?

2. What physical or geographical components of the school are most vulnerable to these threats?

3. What agencies and personnel need to participate in an exercise?
 - Police
 - Fire
 - EMS
 - State Agencies
 - School Staff
 - Hospital
 - Resource Officer
 - Local Authorities
 - Volunteer Organizations
 - Others

4. What crisis management functions are most in need of rehearsal?
 - Evacuation
 - Communications
 - Violence Management
 - Coordination & Control
 - Injury Assistance
 - Resource Management
 - External Agency Interaction
 - Lockdown
 - Fire Drills
 - Announcements
 - Weather Drills
 - Family Notification
 - Personnel Management
 - Other

5. Which type of exercise do you intend to conduct?
 - Orientation Seminar
 - Drill
 - Tabletop Exercise
 - Functional Exercise
 - Full-Scale Exercise

EXERCISE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET #1b

REASONS TO EXERCISE

<i>ORIENTATION SEMINAR</i>	<i>DRILL</i>	<i>TABLETOP EXERCISE</i>	<i>FUNCTIONAL EXERCISE</i>	<i>FULL SCALE EXERCISE</i>
No previous exercises	Establish equipment capabilities	Practice group problem solving	Evaluate any function	Information analysis
No recent crises	Determine response times	Executive familiarity	Observe physical facilities use	Interagency cooperation
New plan	Personnel training	Specific case study	Reinforce established policies and procedures	Policy confirmation
New procedure	Interagency cooperation	Specific threat area	School accreditation	Negotiation
New staff, leadership	Determine resource and manpower capabilities	Examine manpower contingencies	Test seldom used resources	Resource and manpower allocation
New facility		Test group responsibility interpretation	Measure resource adequacy	Media attention
Newly identified Threat		Observe information sharing	Confirm inter-agency relationships	Equipment capabilities
New assisting local agency		Assess interagency coordination		Inter-agency operations/relations
		Train personnel in negotiation/interaction		

EXERCISE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET #1c

DETERMINING YOUR CAPABILITY TO EXERCISE

The questions below concern important exercise requirements. There are sure to be others, but these at least emphasize the level of effort and other requirements placed on the school.

1. What and when was your school's last exercise?

2. What exercise development experience is on your staff (or from borrowed staff)?

 Yourself: _____

 Staff: _____

3. How much preparation time can you reasonably expect to have allocated to developing an exercise?

Actual person days _____ *time remaining until the exercise* _____

4. What manpower can you reasonably expect to have devoted to developing an exercise? List their names and person days available.

 Own Staff: _____

 Other Agencies: _____

 Parent Associations/Volunteers: _____

5. What skills can that manpower provide? List names of staff providing the skills.

Planning _____

Logistics _____

Promotion _____

Materials _____

Scenarios _____

Coordination _____

Evaluation _____

Other _____

6. What physical facilities do you use when you conduct a critical incident operation? Note whether they would be available for the exercise?

7. What communications and warning systems do you use in a real emergency? Note whether they would be available for the exercise without interfering with daily functioning.

8. What is the expected attitude of the staff and students to the exercise?

Staff: _____

Students: _____

Parent Association: _____

EXERCISE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET #2 DEVELOPING THE SCOPE OF THE EXERCISE

Defining the scope of an exercise means putting realistic limits to it. To define the scope of your exercise, refer to **EXERCISE ASSESSMENT WORKSHEETS #1a - #1c** and determine those limits that are the highest priority and can be realistically addressed in one exercise.

In the space below, record the decisions you have made:

1. Threat: (Select one or at most two that are high priority, have not been exercised recently, or best support functions to be tested)

2. Geographic Location: (Be specific; make sure it is logical for the hazard choice)

3. Functions: (Choose the most important; three to five are usually sufficient)

4. Personnel and Agencies: (Select those that would benefit most and match the functions to be tested)

5. Exercise Type: (Consider the exercise experience of personnel involved and the desired degree of stress and complexity)
 - Orientation Seminar
 - Drill
 - Table Top Exercise
 - Functional Exercise
 - Full Scale Exercise

EXERCISE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET #4 DETERMINE THE EXERCISE OBJECTIVES

Objectives take the purpose statement one step further-by breaking down general purposes into specific objectives. Objectives state exactly what you want an exercise to accomplish. They spell out **who**, will do **what**, and according to **what standard**. Objectives must be carefully phrased and should be SIMPLE, CLEAR, SPECIFIC, AND MEASURABLE. Because objectives are linked to the purpose statement, you must look closely at the statement and define objectives that are tied to participants and functions. Below are some examples:

- Evacuate the school in accordance with the school Crisis Management Plan (CMP).
- Conduct a lockdown in accordance with the school CMP.
- Establish communications between nominated local emergency services agencies within 5 minutes of CMP activation.
- Establish direct liaison with the incident commander/command post within 10 minutes of arrival of local emergency first responders.

EXERCISE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET #5

COMPOSE THE EXERCISE NARRATIVE

The narrative is a brief description that will set the stage for the exercise. It provides background information about the emergency and helps participants approach the exercise as a real situation.

Instructions: *Use this checklist as a reminder of those essential elements of information to be included in developing an exercise.*

- _____ What event?
- _____ How did you find out?
- _____ Was there advance warning?
- _____ What time? Date?
- _____ What happened in sequence?
- _____ Does the event move geographically?
(Internally/externally)
- _____ Where?
- _____ How fast, developing, dangerous?
- _____ What response has been taken?
- _____ What impact is already reported?
- _____ What is anticipated for the future?
- _____ What are the weather conditions?
- _____ Where are you in following the guidance in your CMP?
- _____ Other factors?

SAMPLE FIRE DRILL NARRATIVES

1. In the midst of the first class period, thick black smoke is observed coming from the chemistry lab and the fire alarm is sounded. No class is in session in the lab. The weather is sunny and the outdoor temperature is 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

2. A light rain has been falling intermittently all morning and the outdoor temperature is 37 degrees Fahrenheit. Five minutes after the beginning of the second class period, heavy smoke is observed coming from the cafeteria area and the fire alarm is sounded.

3. Two minutes after the class period change bell rings the halls are filled with bustling students and staff when the fire alarm sounds. No smoke or fire has been reported. The weather is sunny and the outdoor temperature is 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

SAMPLE FLOOD RELATED NARRATIVE

Steady rain has been falling in the region due to a moisture-laden low-pressure system. Early into the storm the National Weather Service (NWS) issued a 'Flood Watch'. Within ten hours after the rain began to fall, the NWS issued a Flood Warning for low-lying areas along small streams. Some roads had to be closed and a small number of residents had to be evacuated along overflowing streams located Northwest of the city.

At present, 16 hours have elapsed since the rain began. Based on reports from designated citizens with rain gauges, it has been learned that total rainfall across the jurisdiction ranges from 4.1- 4.7 inches. The soil has reached the saturation point, thus causing extensive runoff. Designated river spotters, water level gauges, and/or electronic river rise warning devices indicated that the river has risen to a dangerous level.

The 24-hour forecast calls for continued rainfall, with a clearing trend possible. Based on this data, the NWS issues a Flood Warning for areas along the river basin. Police report additional road closings due to high water, and a couple dozen more residents have been evacuated. Water levels are rising steadily, as a driving rain continues to fall. The Schools Superintendent will issue a directive for all county/city schools at midday today.

It is now 11:00 a.m. The school remains open and the staff has been assembled for an update briefing.

EXERCISE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET #6 MAJOR AND DETAILED EXERCISE EVENTS

Events are realistic problems, either large or small, that occur as a result of the disaster. They motivate the actions that you want from players during the course of the exercise. Major events are similar to chapter headings in a novel. Detailed events are smaller problems associated with or resulting from major events. Events are problems, not actions of the responders.

LOCKDOWN

EVENTS:

MAJOR EVENT 1: Unregistered intruder confronted by staff custodian

MAJOR EVENT 2: Assault of custodian

Detailed Events:

- Custodian reports to the administration offices asking for medical assistance
- Administrative staff determine the presence of an intruder

MAJOR EVENT 3: Period bell sounds at 11:00 a.m.

Detailed Events:

- Students enter the hallways
- Passing students notice the bloodied custodian
- Students congregate in groups of 25 – 30 near the administrative offices

MAJOR EVENT 4: Disturbance reported in cafeteria at 11:03 a.m.

Detailed Events:

- Office staff hear screams and calls for help
- Many students run from the cafeteria
- A number of students are trampled in the panic

EXERCISE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET #7

DETERMINING EXPECTED ACTIONS

The main purpose of any exercise is to get the participants to think and act in certain ways. The actions are spelled out as procedures or policies in your school's Crisis Management Plan or Crisis Response Procedures. The actions you select will depend upon the exercise objectives and the plan being tested.

Each event should be designed to prompt one or more expected actions from one or more agencies participating in the exercise.

Detailed Event

Custodian reports to the administrative offices asking for medical assistance.

Expected Actions

- ✓ Verify the crisis
- ✓ Assess the situation
- ✓ Convene the Crisis Response Team
- ✓ Institute lockdown
- ✓ Contact police
- ✓ Notify the Superintendent

EXERCISE DEVELOPMENT WORKSHEET #8 DEVELOPING EXERCISE MESSAGES

Messages are the means by which the expected actions are brought about.

Source of Message (who)	This should raise questions of who sent the message and how credible is the source. Did sender actually see event or is it hearsay? Raises questions of the need to verify information.
Method of Transmission (send)	How is the message getting to the recipient? Phone, radio, word of mouth, etc.
Content of Message (what)	Is it complete? Does it provide all necessary information to make the decision?
Recipient/Referral Course (to whom)	If first recipient is not the decision maker, what course does the message then have to take? How many interpretations of the message will there be before a decision is made?

ALL OF THESE THINGS WILL INFLUENCE

ACTION (effect)

WHICH WILL BE ONE OF AT LEAST THESE FOUR CHOICES



VERIFICATION

information gathering

CONSIDERATION

discussion, negotiation with others, consultation of plan

DEFERRAL

put action on priority list

DECISION

deploy or deny resources

**A SAMPLE EMERGENCY
EXERCISE MESSAGE FORM**

E X E R C I S E M E S S A G E

TO: _____

FROM: _____

METHOD: _____

NO: _____ DATE/TIME: _____

CONTENT:

ACTION TAKEN:

