

Sample Exercise Planning Timeline

APR



April
Concept & Objectives Meeting



Purpose
This is the formal beginning of the planning process. Identify the type, scope, objectives, and purpose of the exercise



Key Outcomes

- Agreement regarding exercise type, scenario, capabilities, tasks, and objectives
- Consensus regarding the target exercise timeframe, location, and date
- Identification of entities that may want to participate
- Schedule of planning meetings
- Send save-the-date email inviting identified entities/partners and ask for commitment to participate

MAY



May
Initial Planning Meeting



Purpose
This is the start of the development phase



Key Outcomes

- A list of confirmed exercise participants
- Identification and availability of Subject Matter Experts for scenario vetting and/or evaluation
- A list of which exercise documents and presentations must be employed, and assignments for drafting each
- If needed, identify availability of all policies, plans, procedures needed to draft exercise materials
- Identify and assign responsibility for exercise logistics
- A list of critical activities for the next planning meeting

JUN



June
Midterm Planning Meeting



Purpose
Review draft documentation (e.g., scenario, Exercise Plan [ExPlan], Controller and Evaluator [C/E] Handbook). Discuss remaining exercise design concepts, scenario and timeline development, scheduling, logistics, and administrative requirements



Key Outcomes

- Agreement on final ExPlan details
- Review all key exercise documents (e.g., ExPlan, C/E Handbook)
- Identify control and evaluation staff, key players
- Review list of confirmed participants

JUL



July
Master Scenario Events List Meeting



Purpose
May not be necessary for less complex exercises. The Master Scenario Events List (MSEL) meeting focuses on developing the MSEL. The MSEL is a chronological listing of key events



Key Outcomes

- Key events and the time of their delivery are identified, and responsibility for constructing the remaining events is assigned

AUG



August
Final Planning Meeting



Purpose
Conduct final comprehensive review of all remaining draft documents, resolve open exercise planning issues, review all exercise logistical activities



Key Outcomes

- Exercise planning team has a clear understanding of — and gives final approval for — exercise processes and procedures
- Exercise documents and materials are approved
- Remaining issues are identified and resolved
- Logistical elements, including A/V equipment, site configuration and setup, refreshments, and schedule, are confirmed
- Update confirmed participant list

SEP



September
Tabletop Exercise



Purpose
Using the provided scenario in an informal setting, validate plans and procedures, including any new protocols or policies implemented as a result of the organizational self-assessment



Key Outcomes

- Identification of additional gaps in plans and procedures as well as a plan for improvement.
- Prepare for the Functional Exercise

OCT



October
Player Briefing



Purpose
Address individual roles and responsibilities, exercise parameters, safety, security badges, and any remaining logistical exercise concerns or questions



Key Outcomes

- Players have a clear understanding of the exercise objectives, capabilities, assumptions, artificialities, safety and security requirements, control and evaluation strategies

NOV



November
Statewide Medical and Health Exercise



Purposes
The exercise tests plans, policies, procedures, agreements, and networks for the staff of participating organizations and agencies, in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement



Key Outcomes

- An opportunity is provided to exercise objectives among multiple disciplines, agencies, and jurisdictions
- “Hot wash” - Strengths and action items are identified to enhance readiness efforts

DEC



December
After-Action Meeting



Purpose
Following completion of a draft After-Action Report (AAR), the Exercise Planning Team, Evaluation Team, and other stakeholders meet to review and refine the draft AAR



Key Outcomes

- As part of the After-Action Meeting, attendees review the Improvement Plan (IP). The IP articulates specific corrective actions by addressing issues identified in the AAR
- The refined AAR and IP are then finalized and the file is shared with approved stakeholders and uploaded to grant mandated sites