



**Vol. 4
Issue 7**

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By James M. Thomas

This month we are concentrating on “Exercises” as our theme. We all know how important it is to develop the plans for the various types of emergencies that we might encounter, but it is very critical that we exercise or test the plans to see what the strengths and deficiencies of the plan are.

To the credit of the many public safety professionals, including the fire fighters, the police, emergency management, public health, public works, hazardous material teams at the local, state and federal levels we do see a significant increase in training, and exercises.

Recently two events come to mind to show that this is paying off with big dividends. One of the incidents was the fire in Colchester on June 13th, where the smoke was seen as far as 25 miles away. The local papers credit the outstanding team work of the many fire departments that responded in keeping the fire under control. The fire chief indicated that one of the reasons was that the many departments have been training with each other more frequently after the September 11th terrorism attack.

In another incident this past May, a 71 year old man, from West Hartford was rescued from Case Mountain in Manchester with the Community Emergency Response Team Mountain Bike Unit, assisted by the Bolton and Glastonbury Fire Departments. Again they have practiced together in exercises well before this life saving rescue.

To quote the famous Baseball Hall of Famer Carl Ripken in his book, “Get in the Game”, “Proper preparation helps you create a better game plan. It increases your chance of success and decreases the risk that something will go wrong.”

We all know that training and exercises and proper preparation is the key to success!

Enjoy the July issue of the DEMHS ADVISOR.

WHAT'S NEW:

**July is National UV
Safety Month**

UPCOMING TRAINING and EXERCISES

**Cat 2 Hurricane Functional
Exercise**

CERT Weekend, Sept. 6-7

**Senior Fraud
Investigations**

CAMEO Training

Plan To Exercise....Exercise To Plan

By Robert Christ, MEP, State Exercise Training Officer

As we go through our daily lives our actions are usually tied into achieving a goal or objective. Though these are usually small in nature they help us with our big picture and possibly larger expectations. As we join the workforce we become members of companies, corporations or departments also with goals both short term and long range. To achieve these expected end results it is prudent to develop a plan or plans to aid in the process.

Once a plan is written it must be considered a “living” document, capable of being changed when and if necessary. It should be done whenever it is required, and that is, when there is significant change in the organizational climate or structure. The key is not to hold on to time tested ideas and strategies in changing times. You need to change with those times and put your new plans to the test. Exercising a plan is one of the best ways to ferret out the gaps in the goals and objectives that have been implemented.

By exercising our plans we allow the participants, be they operational personnel or elected officials, to validate plans and training in prevention, protection, response or recovery in a stress free environment. Exercises can be the first step in evaluating preparedness and discovering areas for improvement. They also help communities or organizations get an objective overview of their capabilities, so that gaps and deficiencies in either plans or operational tactics can be addressed or revised prior to a real life incident.

Effective exercises help to:

- Assess and validate policies, plans, procedures,
- training and interagency agreements
- Define and validate roles and responsibilities;
- Improve interagency coordination and communications;
- Identify gaps in resources and operational objectives;
- Measure performance;
- Identify opportunities for re-evaluation and improvement.

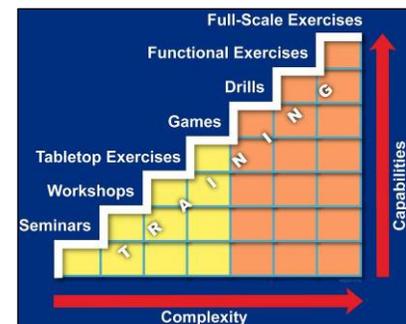


Figure 1

Training and Exercise personnel at the Connecticut Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security have stepped to the forefront of offering exercise development assistance to local and state agencies, and also to the private sector. It is our goal to develop a capabilities based, self-sustaining exercise programs whenever requested (Figure 1).

All exercise design and conducts follow the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP). So, what is HSEEP?

HSEEP is:

- A capabilities-based exercise program that provides a standardized methodology and consistent terminology for designing, developing, conducting, and evaluating all exercises
- It provides tools and resources to help build self-sustaining exercise programs
- Includes a cycle, mix, and range of exercise activities of varying degrees of complexity and interaction
- Meets the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and the National Response Framework (NRF) doctrine and protocols

There are two types of exercises, Discussion-Based and Operations-Based. Seminars, workshops, tabletops and games are all discussion based. These types of exercises are usually conducted to test strategic or policy driven issues. They are usually objective driven facilitated discussions. For example:

Tabletop Exercises: is intended to generate discussion of emergency management issues regarding a hypothetical situation in an informal setting. A tabletop exercise can be used to assess policies, plans, procedures, and resources to access types of systems needed to prevent, prepare for, respond to, or recover from a defined event. Tabletop exercises can facilitate an understanding of NIMS concepts, identifying strengths or shortfalls, and/or achieving changes in attitudes or perceptions. During a tabletop exercise, participants typically discuss the issues raised by a series of problem statements, using appropriate policies, plans, procedures, and resources. A tabletop exercise can involve senior staff, elected or appointed officials, or other key emergency management staff at the coordination, operations or discipline specific level.

The exercise is then evaluated and the end result is that certain “gaps” are found in procedures, which then may be adjusted by the participants by changing existing plans.

Operation-Based exercises are more intricate exercises that are used to validate plans, procedures, policies and resources that were instituted after discussion-based exercises. The main difference in these types of exercises is that there is an actual response and mobilization of resources.

Full-Scale Exercises: A full-scale exercise is the most complex exercise. Full-scale exercises are multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional exercises that can test many facets of emergency management response and recovery. A full-scale exercise focuses on implementing and analyzing policies, plans, procedures, and resources developed in discussion-based exercises and refined in previous, smaller, operations-based exercises. The events for a full-scale exercise are projected through a scripted exercise scenario. Full-scale exercises are conducted in a real-time, stressful environment that should closely mirror a real event. First responders and resources are mobilized and deployed to the scene where the responders conduct their actions as if a real incident has occurred. Emergency Operations Center (or other multi-agency coordination system entities) should actively participate in full-scale exercises.

Upon conclusion, these exercises are evaluated on both the strategic and tactical scale. The operation is analyzed to see if expected actions for pre-established objectives have been carried out. Any gaps that have been found at this level can be discussed as training or policy problems. Whichever it is, the cycle continues with a return to discussion-based exercises and again building to the operational level. This cyclical procedure helps in the self-sustaining element of the exercise program (Figure 2).



Figure 2

Through exercise and the mindset that a plan is an asset to be adjusted as times change, an organization can set goals and objectives that are no longer anachronisms, but viable guidelines for a successful operation. This will make the organization and its personnel a more in tune and effective team.

If you need information about the State of Connecticut Exercise Program and how it can help you and your organization, please contact:

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Left to right: Gary Ruggiero, Ed Murray, Gordon Harris, Ray Crowley, and Tom Romano.

H5N1 Alternate Care Full Scale Exercise—June 23, 2008

The exercise centered around activation of an Alternate Care Facility (ACF), located at Washington School and a triage Mobile Acute Care Unit (MACU), located at Manchester Hospital. The MACU tents were supplied and manned by the Capitol Region Medical Reserve Corps.

Communications was provided by the Manchester CERT team (Emcomm), the team had 22 volunteer radio operators. Emcomm set up communications nodes in the following separate and distinct locations; Manchester EOC, MMH MACU, Washington ACF, CT DPH's EOC, MMH's EOC and on the three victim/volunteer shuttle busses. Communications between all these different venues was handled on 4 separate radio frequencies and controlled by the Communications units at the EOC.

The premise of the exercise was an avian flu (H5N1) outbreak that had overwhelmed Manchester Hospital and the ACF, MACU and EOC were pressed into service to handle the outbreak.

There were over 125 volunteer victim patients (ranging from youths to seniors to handicapped persons). They went through the entire triage and admission process. In addition to this a delegation of Chinese Government officials toured the EOC and volunteered to be victims and were taken through the entire process.

On the whole, the exercise was a huge success.



Photos and article courtesy of Don Jannell, Manchester

Annual Emergency Management Director's Workshop—June 17, 2008
Savin Rock Convention Center, West Haven



On June 17th, DEMHS held the third annual Hurricane workshop for local emergency management directors. In addition to the updates on hurricane related information, this year program offered a few new presentations. The Lt. Governor Michael Fedele kicked off the seminar, followed by FEMA Region 1 Director Art Cleaves. April Perry flew in from Washington DC to discuss NIMS CAST and DEMHS staff gave an update on legal issues, grant programs and public assistance program after a disaster, as well as WEB EOC.

Even with all this information, the highlight of the seminar was a display of CT's strength in response. A special thanks goes out to Westport Fire, New Haven Fire, Milford Fire, CT National Guard, CT USAR and Derby Civil Defense for providing the noon time display. The display was viewed by the EMD's at the seminar and by the LT. Gov. to tape a session of Open Mike to be aired in August.



EMD Worksop Con't



Upcoming Training & Exercise

Jul 23	FEMA Region I, Hurricane Tabletop Exercise - Maynard MA
Jul 29	Cat-2 Hurricane Functional Exercise—Middletown
Aug 4	Senior Fraud Investigations—POSTC
Aug 5	Senior Fraud Investigations—POSTC
Aug 5	Utilizing Computer-Aided Management (CAMEO) - Brainard
Aug 6	Senior Fraud Investigations—POSTC
Aug 19 thru 21	ICS 300 — for Expanding Incidents—New Haven
Sept 6 thru 7	CERT Weekend—CFA, Windsor Locks
Sept 23 & 24	ICS 400—Advanced Command, Complex Incidents—New Haven
Oct 7 thru 9	ICS 300 — for Expanding Incidents—New Haven
Nov 18 thru 20	ICS 300 — for Expanding Incidents—Brainard
Dec 10 & 11	ICS 400—Advanced Command, Complex Incidents—Brainard

For training & exercise questions contact the Training Unit at 860-256-0840.
 Fax: 860-706-5539 or email: Training.demhs@ct.gov

You may register for these courses as listed at: www.ct.gov/demhs
 or through POSTC at www.ct.gov/post.

UV SAFETY MONTH

During July, UV Safety Month, the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Eye M.D.s around the country encourage everyone to protect their eyes from UV-related damage.

- The same UV-A and UV-B rays that can damage your skin can harm your eyes as well. When you protect yourself from the sun, don't just think sunscreen - think sunglasses and a wide brimmed hat.
- Excessive, prolonged UV exposure may be linked to the development of eye conditions such as cataracts and age-related macular degeneration.
- Extensive or intense exposure to UV rays can cause "sunburn" on the surface of your eye. Similar to a skin sunburn, eye surface burns usually disappear within a couple of days, but may lead to further complications later in life so protect your eyes.

To protect your eyes, wear a brimmed hat and the right kind of sunglasses when you are going to be exposed to UV light.

- Wear sunglasses that block 99 to 100 percent of UV-A and UV-B rays.
- If you spend time on the water or in the snow, consider purchasing goggles or sunglasses that wrap around your temples because they block the sun's rays from entering on the sides, offering better protection.
- Remember sunglasses don't have to be expensive to offer the right kind of UV protection. Even inexpensive glasses can protect your eyes if they offer 99 to 100 percent UV-A and UV-B protection.
- Don't forget the kids. Protect their eyes with hats and sunglasses. In addition, try to keep children out of the sun between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. when the sun's ultraviolet rays are the strongest.

It's important to protect your eyes when UV light is most intense.

- Generally, UV light is at the greatest level at midday (10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.), but you need to protect your eyes whenever you're outside for a prolonged period, even when it's gray and overcast.
- Reflected sunlight off water, snow and pavement can be the most dangerous type of UV light because it is intensified.
- Your eyes can be harmed by UV light sources other than the sun, such as welding lamps or tanning lights. So remember to wear eye protection when using these sources of invisible, high energy UV rays.





Colchester Recycling Fire
June 13, 2008

Smoke from the fire could be seen more than 25 miles away in Hartford. Dozens of fire departments from New London, Windham and Hartford counties responded to the blaze at M&J Recycling and the M&J Bus company on Route 85 is near the Salem line.



Photos courtesy of Shane Dupuis