

School Tabletops, Drills and Exercises

Emergency Management for Schools

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Presentation Goals

- Create Context and Justification for Emergency Exercises in Schools
- Overview Types of Emergency Exercises
- Outline Key Stakeholders
- Steps for Building an Emergency Exercise Continuum
- Guidelines for Table Tops, Functional and Full-scale Exercises
- Promote Evaluation and Improvement Plans
- Identify Resources



Context & Justification for Emergency Exercises In Schools

- Clarify roles and responsibilities
- Evaluate plans and procedures
- Develop effective agency relationships
- Assess resources and capabilities
- Identify needs and solutions
- Most states have legislation requiring school exercises and drills



Many emergency management agencies and other accredited public safety agencies must conduct various types of exercises on an annual basis.



School Exercises Are a Core Element of The Preparedness Phase



Emergency Exercises are Central to Fear Management



Alarmist

Complacency

We Should be Here

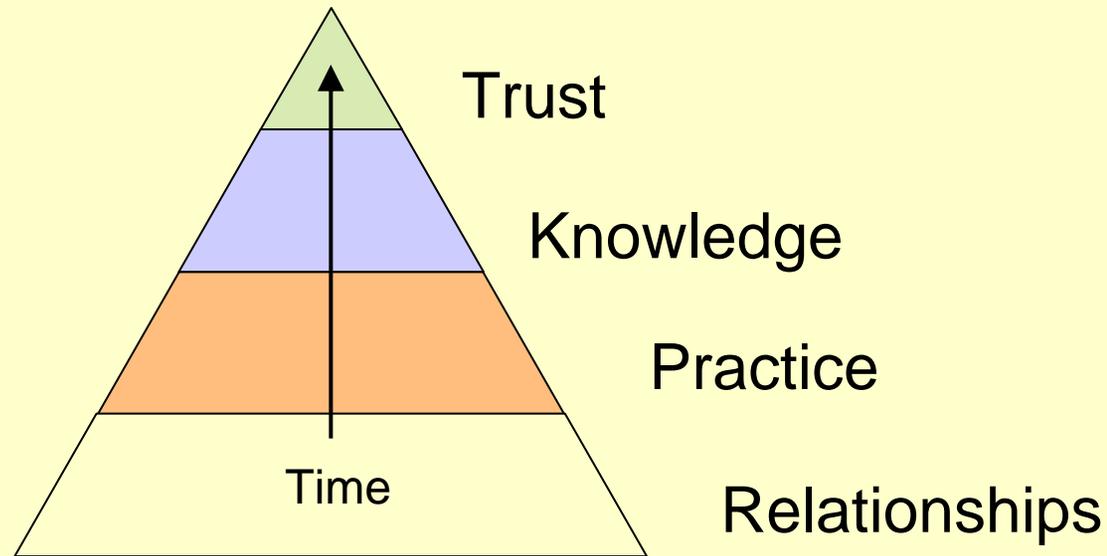
Proactive Liability Management



A Key to Effective Emergency Response in Schools...

...is exercising the "balance" between flexibility and consistency that is best developed through an exercise design continuum.

Flexibility ← Good Judgment → Consistency

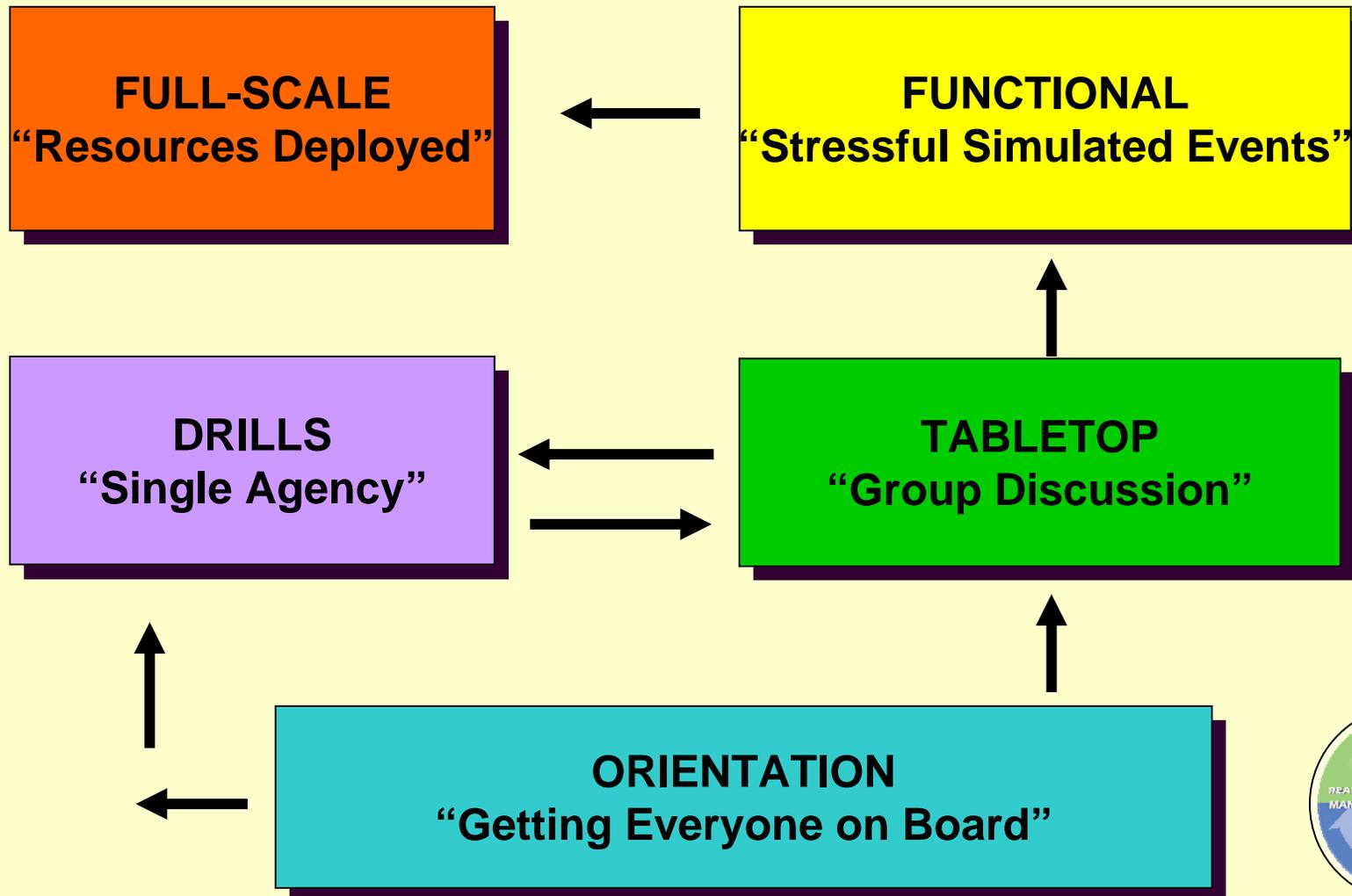


Types of Exercises

- **Orientation Meetings:** Inform about emergency operations plans and emergency procedures (1-2 hours to do, 2+ days to plan).
- **Drills:** Perfection of an individual emergency procedure (1/2 - 2 hrs to hold, 3+ days to plan).
- **Tabletops:** Identify roles and responsibilities in different scenarios (1-4 hours to do, 1+ month to plan).
- **Functional Exercises:** Roundtable simulation of emergency situation with realistic timeline (3-8 hours to do, 3 months to plan).
- **Full-scale Exercises:** Multi-agency, on-site simulation of an emergency situation; all resources deployed (1/2 - multiple days to do, 6 months+ to plan).



Types of Exercises



Key Stakeholders To Include

- School Officials (Board of Education, other school administrators and School based ERTs)
- Law Enforcement (Police, Sheriff, SRO, State, Military Police, Tribal)
- Fire Agencies (City, County, Correctional Facility)
- Emergency Management (city, county, state)
- Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Air Medical Units
- 911 Dispatch
- Transportation
- Public Health
- Media
- Hospitals
- Parent Groups
- Students
- Special Needs Populations



Groups Who Can Assist You

- Local Emergency Management Agency (LEMA)
- Local Public Safety Agencies
- School District Personnel or School Resource Officer
- Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)
- State and Local Homeland Security Agencies

A LEPC is a committee that is comprised of members from government, industry and elected officials who are involved in emergency planning activities in a community. Check with your local Emergency Manager.



Best Practices in Conducting Exercises

- Practice a variety of different scenarios based upon risks in the school and community.
- Utilize hazard / vulnerability data
- Collaborate with Disaster and Emergency Services
- Practice a variety of different response procedures, such as lockdown, shelter-in-place, evacuation.
- Communicate information in advance (with parents, media and surrounding neighborhoods as appropriate).
- Evaluate and document lessons learned in an [after-action review and an after-action report.](#)
- Implement exercise outcome recommendations.



Best Practices in Conducting Exercises

- Test the capacity of *all* agencies - not just schools.
- Drill under different conditions (time, weather, staffing levels).
- Identify weaknesses / continuous improvement - but design succession of exercises to instill feelings of "success."
- Make sure that one objective is to implement the Incident Command System (ICS) to be compliant with National Incident Management System (NIMS) and to better integrate with local response agencies.
- Build it for success - not to break it (you'll *still* have many challenges and problems)



Example: Developing a Tabletop

Pre-Planning

- Hazard Analysis
- Establish Objectives
- Inform the Media
- Orientation Meetings
- Set Timelines
- Identify Participants
- Pre-exercise Training
- Single agency Drill

Tabletop Exercise

- Identify a Facilitator
- Identify a Scribe
- Draft the Narrative
- Room Layout
- Breaks/Refreshments
- Presentation
- Copies of Materials
- Sign in Sheet
- Conduct the Exercise

After Action

- Immediate Debriefing
- Participant Evaluation
- Comprehensive Report
- Post Exercise Meeting
- Functional Exercise
- Full Scale Exercise
- Revisions
- Training
- Implementation

Developing a tabletop exercise normally evolves over a 1-3 month period. The event typically lasts 1-4 hours.



Building an Exercise Design Continuum for *Success*

1. Select one of your school's main vulnerabilities.
2. With response agencies, set a date 1 - 2 years in advance for a full-scale exercise based on that vulnerability. Designate a Design Team Leader -- or make sure there is a Central School Liaison who is part of the *external agency* design team.
3. From that date, back into an orientation session.
4. Determine which procedures will be utilized in the full-scale exercise, then schedule a series of drills that separately address each one.
5. After several such drills, schedule 2-3 tabletops.
6. Next: hold a functional exercise.
7. Execute the full-scale exercise
8. *Hold after action reviews throughout*
9. *Implement the evaluation results throughout*



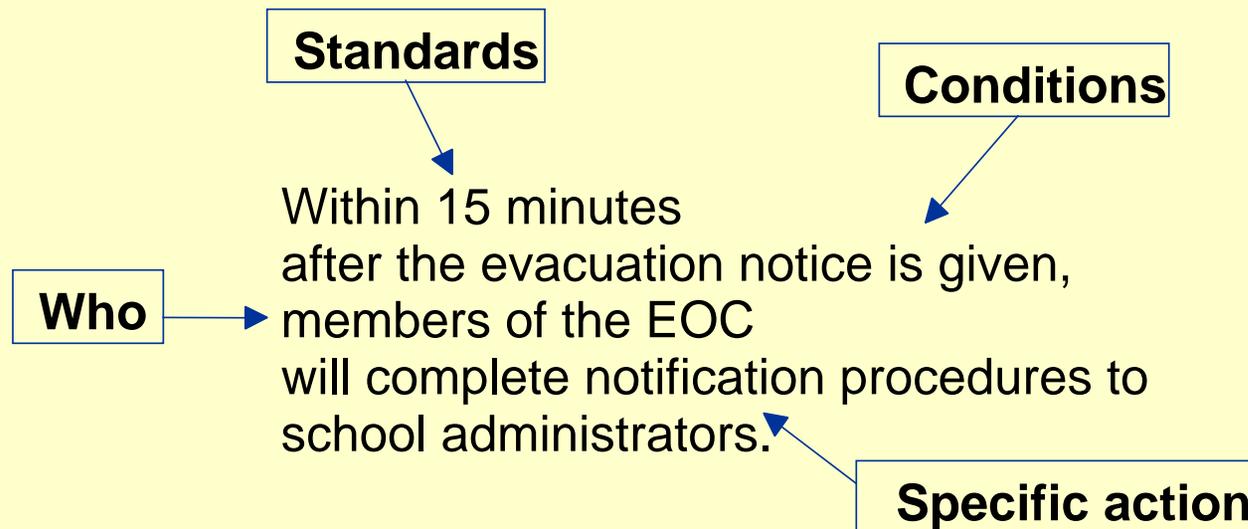
Defining the Scope of Full Scale Exercise

- Location:
 - Choose a realistic site. Consider traffic problems and safety issues.
- Functions:
 - List operations to be practiced.
 - Be specific about the procedures addressed within each function.
- Participants:
 - Which organizations need to be involved to carry out the functions being tested?
 - Which representatives from those organizations should be there?
- Narrow the list to those who are required in order to carry out the actions.



Objectives

- Descriptions of the performance you expect from participants to demonstrate competence
- Clear, concise, focused on participant performance
- Should state who should do what under what conditions according to what standards.



Common Exercise Mistakes

- Scenarios that are not unique to your area
- Scenarios too complex for the LEA to manage successfully
- Timing of the exercise
- No accurate critique of the exercise
- Safety issues are not addressed properly
- Planned and initiated too quickly
- Some critical agencies are not included
- After action items are not implemented



For More Information

- Lessons Learned Information Sharing (LLIS):
 - www.llis.gov
- Exercise Development/Design Courses (FEMA) Online Training:
 - <http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/> (IS-120.A, IS-130, IS-139) - *Source material for much of this presentation*
- *Copy of DVD: "Education for Disaster:"*
 - www.gema.state.ga.us (OHS-GEMA)
- Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP):
 - <http://www.hseep.dhs.gov/>
- Readiness and Emergency Management in Schools Technical Assistance Center: exercise specific publications (Helpful Hints, ERCM/REMS Express, Lessons Learned)
 - <http://www.rems.ta.gov>
- Check for local and state resources too!



THANK YOU!!!

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