

Interfacility Transport of a Patient with

Functional Exercise

Exercise Plan

The Exercise Plan (ExPlan) gives elected and appointed officials, observers, media personnel, and players from participating organizations information they need to observe or participate in the exercise. Some exercise material is intended for the exclusive use of exercise planners, controllers, and evaluators, but players may view other materials that are necessary to their performance. All exercise participants may view the ExPlan. This publication was made possible by Grant Number 1 IDSEP160033-01-00 from ASPR. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the HHS.

EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Name	Interfacility Transport of a Patient with Exercise	Functional
Exercise Dates		
Scope	This exercise is a functional exercise planned for at . Exercise play is limited to	
Mission Area(s)	Response and Recovery	
Core Capabilities		
Objectives		
Threat or Hazard	Natural Hazard: Disease Outbreak	
Scenario	Over the past month, there have been seven cases of in the United States. On a Tuesday afternoon, the state Health Department Operations Center is notified that X hospital has a patient with a confirmed diagnosis of (insert the name of the airborne special pathogen selected) and that the patient needs to be transported to another facility. The Operations Center makes notification per standing protocol to initiate the process to plan, coordinate, and monitor transport operations.	
Sponsor		
Participating Organizations		
Point of Contact		

GENERAL INFORMATION

Exercise Objectives and Core Capabilities

The following exercise objectives in Table 1 describe the expected outcomes for the exercise. The objectives are linked to core capabilities, which are distinct critical elements necessary to achieve the specific mission area(s). The objectives and aligned core capabilities are guided by elected and appointed officials and selected by the Exercise Planning Team.

Exercise Objective	Core Capability
REQUIRED OBJECTIVES	
Evaluate capabilities for the interfacility transport of special pathogen patients.	Public Health, Healthcare, and Emergency Medical Services
Assess how patient and provider safety is maintained at all times.	Environmental Response/Health and Safety
Integrate the Incident Command/Unified Command structure used to coordinate transport operations into the larger incident operations being coordinated through either the State Emergency Operations Center or the Health Department Operations Center. OR Coordinate EMS transport operations at either the State Emergency Operations Center or the Health Department Operations Center through use of an Incident Command/Unified Command structure.	Operational Coordination
Demonstrate management of the public message through establishment and operation of a Joint Information Center.	Public Information and Warning
Demonstrate the use of proper technique for decontaminating an ambulance and associated equipment.	Environmental Response/Health and Safety
Validate use of proper technique for donning and doffing PPE>	Public Health, Healthcare, and Emergency Medical Services OR Environmental Response/Health and Safety
Demonstrate proper management of infectious waste.	Environmental Response/Health and Safety
OPTIONAL OBJECTIVES: SELECT	

Exercise Objective	Core Capability
THOSE THAT ARE BEING INCLUDED IN THE EXERCISE	
Demonstrate the ability to resolve any issues with licensure laws, transport agency certification, and/or local medical control that arise during an interstate transport.	Planning
Evaluate the capability to manage the death of a patient during an interstate transport.	Public Health, Healthcare, and Emergency Medical Services
Assess jurisdictional issues that may impact law enforcement escorting the ambulance transporting the patient across jurisdictional lines.	On-scene Security, Protection, and Law Enforcement

Table 1. Exercise Objectives and Associated Core Capabilities

Participant Roles and Responsibilities

The term *participant* encompasses many groups of people, not just those playing in the exercise. Groups of participants involved in the exercise, and their respective roles and responsibilities, are as follows:

- **Players.** Players are personnel who have an active role in discussing or performing their regular roles and responsibilities during the exercise. Players discuss or initiate actions in response to the simulated emergency.
- **Controllers.** Controllers plan and manage exercise play, set up and operate the exercise site, and act in the roles of organizations or individuals that are not playing in the exercise. Controllers direct the pace of the exercise, provide key data to players, and may prompt or initiate certain player actions to ensure exercise continuity. In addition, they issue exercise material to players as required, monitor the exercise timeline, and supervise the safety of all exercise participants. Controllers may also role play nonparticipating organizations or individuals.
- **Evaluators.** Evaluators evaluate and provide feedback on a designated functional area of the exercise. Evaluators observe and document performance against established capability targets and critical tasks, in accordance with the Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs).
- **Actors.** Actors simulate specific roles during exercise play, typically victims or other bystanders. *(Delete bullet if not applicable)*
- **Observers.** Observers visit or view selected segments of the exercise. Observers do not play in the exercise, nor do they perform any control or evaluation functions. Observers view the exercise from a designated observation area and must remain within the observation area during the exercise.

- **Media Personnel.** Some media personnel may be present as observers, pending approval by the sponsor organization and the Exercise Planning Team. *(Delete bullet if not applicable)*
- **Support Staff.** The exercise support staff includes individuals who perform administrative and logistical support tasks during the exercise (e.g., registration, catering).

Exercise Assumptions and Artificialities

In any exercise, assumptions and artificialities may be necessary to complete play in the time allotted and/or account for logistical limitations. Exercise participants should accept that assumptions and artificialities are inherent in any exercise, and should not allow these considerations to negatively impact their participation.

Assumptions and Artificialities

Assumptions constitute the implied factual foundation for the exercise and, as such, are assumed to be present before the exercise starts. The following assumptions apply to the exercise:

- The exercise scenario is plausible and events occur as they are presented.
- The exercise starts at the point the decision is made to transfer a patient from one facility to another. All hospital-based patient treatment activities and epidemiological/public health activities are beyond the scope of the exercise.
- Any assumptions made by exercise participants when "making decisions" or formulating courses of action must be clearly identified for the group.
- The time sequence of events in the scenario and follow-on injects may be compressed to fit the time constraints of the exercise period of play.
- Some resources and response components that would normally be activated during the transport operations (e.g. the EMS agency's operation center, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention personnel) may not be participating in the exercise. However, players should make all notifications, communications, and resource requests to special pathogen transport stakeholders in accordance with existing plans, policies, and procedures. Controllers will play the role of all non-participating stakeholders to receive information and simulate response as needed.

EXERCISE LOGISTICS

Safety

Exercise participant safety takes priority over exercise events. The following general requirements apply to the exercise:

- A Safety Controller is responsible for participant safety; any safety concerns must be immediately reported to the Safety Controller and/or any other exercise control staff. The

Safety Controller and Exercise Director will determine if a real-world emergency warrants a pause in exercise play and when exercise play can be resumed.

- For an emergency that requires assistance, use the phrase [**“real-world emergency.”**] The following procedures should be used in case of a real emergency during the exercise:
 - Anyone who observes a participant who is seriously ill or injured will immediately notify emergency services and the closest controller, and, within reason and training, render aid. *(As needed, change this sentence to reflect local procedures for addressing an emergency that occurs during an exercise)*
 - The controller aware of a real emergency will initiate the [**“real-world emergency”**] broadcast and notify the Safety Controller and Exercise Director of the emergency location and resources needed, if any.

Fire Safety

Standard fire and safety regulations relevant to the venue will be followed during the exercise.

Emergency Medical Services

In the event of a medical emergency, call 9-1-1.

Weapons Policy

All participants will follow the relevant weapons policy for the exercising organization or exercise venue.

See Appendix for a detailed description of the weapons policy.

Site Access

Security

To prevent interruption of the exercise, access to exercise sites is limited to exercise participants. Players should advise their venue’s controller or evaluator of any unauthorized persons.

Media/Observer Coordination *(delete section if not applicable)*

Organizations with media personnel and/or observers attending the exercise should coordinate with the sponsor organization for access to the exercise site. Media/Observers are escorted to designated areas and accompanied by an exercise controller at all times. Sponsor organization representatives and/or the observer controller may be present to explain exercise conduct and answer questions. Exercise participants should be advised of media and/or observer presence.

Exercise Identification *(delete section if not applicable)*

Exercise staff may be identified by badges, hats, and/or vests to clearly display exercise roles; additionally, uniform clothing may be worn to show agency affiliation. Table 2 describes these identification items.

Group	Color
Exercise Director	
Facilitator	
Controllers	
Evaluators	
Actors	
Support Staff	
Observers/VIPs	
Media Personnel	
Players, Uniformed	
Players, Civilian Clothes	

Table 2. Exercise Identification

POST-EXERCISE AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

Debriefings

Post-exercise debriefings aim to collect sufficient relevant data to support effective evaluation and improvement planning.

Hot Wash

At the conclusion of exercise play, controllers facilitate a Hot Wash at each venue to allow players to discuss strengths and areas for improvement, and allow evaluators to seek clarification regarding player actions and decision-making processes. All participants may attend; however, observers and the media are not encouraged to attend the meeting. The Hot Wash should not exceed 30 minutes.

Controller and Evaluator Debriefing

Controllers and evaluators attend a facilitated C/E Debriefing immediately following the exercise. During this debriefing, controllers and evaluators provide an overview of their observed functional areas and discuss strengths and areas for improvement.

Participant Feedback Forms

Participant Feedback Forms provide players with the opportunity to comment candidly on exercise activities and exercise design. Participant Feedback Forms should be collected at the conclusion of the Hot Wash.

Evaluation

Exercise Evaluation Guides

EEGs assist evaluators in collecting relevant exercise observations. EEGs document exercise objectives and aligned core capabilities, capability targets, and critical tasks. Each EEG provides evaluators with information on what they should expect to see demonstrated in their functional area. The EEGs, coupled with Participant Feedback Forms and Hot Wash notes, are used to evaluate the exercise and compile the After-Action Report (AAR).

After-Action Report

The AAR summarizes key information related to evaluation. The AAR primarily focuses on the analysis of core capabilities, including capability performance, strengths, and areas for improvement. AARs also include basic exercise information, including the exercise name, type of exercise, dates, location, participating organizations, mission area(s), specific threat or hazard, a brief scenario description, and the name of the exercise sponsor and POC.

Improvement Planning

Improvement planning is the process by which the observations recorded in the AAR are resolved through development of concrete corrective actions, which are prioritized and tracked as a part of a continuous corrective action program.

After-Action Meeting

The After-Action Meeting (AAM) is a meeting held among decision- and policy-makers from the exercising organizations, as well as the Lead Evaluator and members of the Exercise Planning Team, to debrief the exercise and to review and refine the draft AAR and Improvement Plan (IP). The AAM should be an interactive session, providing attendees the opportunity to discuss and validate the observations and corrective actions in the draft AAR/IP.

Improvement Plan

The IP identifies specific corrective actions, assigns them to responsible parties, and establishes target dates for their completion. It is created by elected and appointed officials from the organizations participating in the exercise, and discussed and validated during the AAM.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

Exercise Rules

The following general rules govern exercise play:

- Real-world emergency actions take priority over exercise actions.
- Exercise players will comply with real-world emergency procedures, unless otherwise directed by the control staff.
- All communications (including written, radio, telephone, and e-mail) during the exercise will begin and end with the statement [**“This is an exercise.”**]

Players Instructions

Players should follow certain guidelines before, during, and after the exercise to ensure a safe and effective exercise.

Before the Exercise

- Review appropriate organizational plans, procedures, and exercise support documents.
- Be at the appropriate site at least 30 minutes before the exercise starts. Wear the appropriate uniform and/or identification item(s).
- Sign in when you arrive.
- If you gain knowledge of the scenario before the exercise, notify a controller so that appropriate actions can be taken to ensure a valid evaluation.

During the Exercise

- Respond to exercise events and information as if the emergency were real, unless otherwise directed by an exercise controller.
- Controllers will give you only information they are specifically directed to disseminate. You are expected to obtain other necessary information through existing emergency information channels.
- Do not engage in personal conversations with controllers, evaluators, observers, or media personnel.
- If you do not understand the scope of the exercise, or if you are uncertain about an organization’s participation in an exercise, ask a controller.
- Parts of the scenario may seem implausible. Recognize that the exercise has objectives to satisfy and may require incorporation of unrealistic aspects. Every effort has been made by exercise planners to balance realism with safety and to create an effective learning and evaluation environment.

- All exercise communications will begin and end with the statement **“This is an exercise.”** This precaution is taken so that anyone who overhears the conversation will not mistake exercise play for a real-world emergency.
- Speak when you take an action. This procedure will ensure that evaluators are aware of critical actions as they occur.
- Maintain a log of your activities or decisions your organization would undertake or make in response to the scenario. Many times, this log may include documentation of activities that were missed by a controller or evaluator.

After the Exercise

- Participate in the Hot Wash.
- Complete the Participant Feedback Form. This form allows you to comment candidly on emergency response activities and exercise effectiveness. Provide the completed form to a member of the support staff.
- Provide any notes or materials generated from the exercise to your controller or evaluator for review and inclusion in the AAR.

Simulation Guidelines

Because the exercise is of limited duration and scope, certain details will be simulated. The physical description of what would fully occur at the incident sites and surrounding areas will be relayed to players by controllers. Controllers will simulate the roles and interactions of nonparticipating organizations or individuals.

APPENDIX A: EXERCISE SCHEDULE

[**Note:** Because this information is updated throughout the exercise planning process, appendices may be developed as stand-alone documents rather than part of the ExPlan.]

Time	Personnel	Activity	Location
		Controller and Evaluator Briefing	
		Check-in for final instructions and communications check	
		Safety Briefing	
		Media Briefing	
		Controllers and evaluators in starting positions	
		Controllers provide player briefs	
		Exercise starts	
		Exercise ends	
Immediately Following the Exercise		Venue Hot Washes/turn in all Participant Feedback Forms	
		Controller and Evaluator After Action Review	

APPENDIX B: EXERCISE PARTICIPANTS

Participating Organizations
Local
State
Federal
Private Sector

APPENDIX C: COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

[The Communications Plan Template can be inserted here as Appendix C.]

APPENDIX D: EXERCISE SITE MAPS

**Figure D.1: State Emergency Operations Center and/or Health Department
Operations Center Layout**

Figure D.2: Joint Information Center (JIC) Layout



Figure D.3: PPE Donning and Doffing Area Layout

Figure D.4: Ambulance and Equipment Decontamination Layout

APPENDIX E: ACRONYMS

Acronym	Term
AAM	After Action Meeting
AAR	After Action Report
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
C/E	Controller/Evaluator
DHS	U.S. Department of Homeland Security
EEG	Exercise Evaluation Guide
EMA	Emergency Management Agency
EMS	Emergency Medical Services
EOC	Emergency Operations Center
ExPlan	Exercise Plan
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
IAP	Incident Action Plan
IC	Incident Commander
IP	Improvement Plan
JIC	Joint Information Center
NGO	Non-Governmental Organizations
OC	Operations Center
PHEOC	Public Health Emergency Operations Center
POC	Point of Contact
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
Q&A	Question and Answer
Sitman	Situation Manual
SME	Subject Matter Expert
UC	Unified Command