

# State of Michigan

## Communications in Exercise



MICHIGAN STATE POLICE  
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & HOMELAND SECURITY DIVISION

Carly Georgopoulos, February 22, 2018

# Introduction

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# Exercise Purpose

- Examine roles, responsibilities, authorities, and capabilities.
- Test plans and procedures.
- Identify items for improvement.
- Confirm areas of strength to continue or improve upon.



# HSEEP

Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) is a capabilities and performance-based exercise program that provides a standardized methodology in and terminology for exercise design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. HSEEP exercises are sizable and scalable for the jurisdiction's needs.



# Exercise Cycle

- Design and Development:
  - Design Team
  - Exercise Participants
  - Scope, Objectives, Scenario
- Conduct:
  - Exercise Documents (Exercise Plan, Situation Manual)
  - Simulation Cell
  - Master Scenario Events List (MESL)
- Evaluation:
  - Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEG)
- Improvement Planning:
  - After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP)

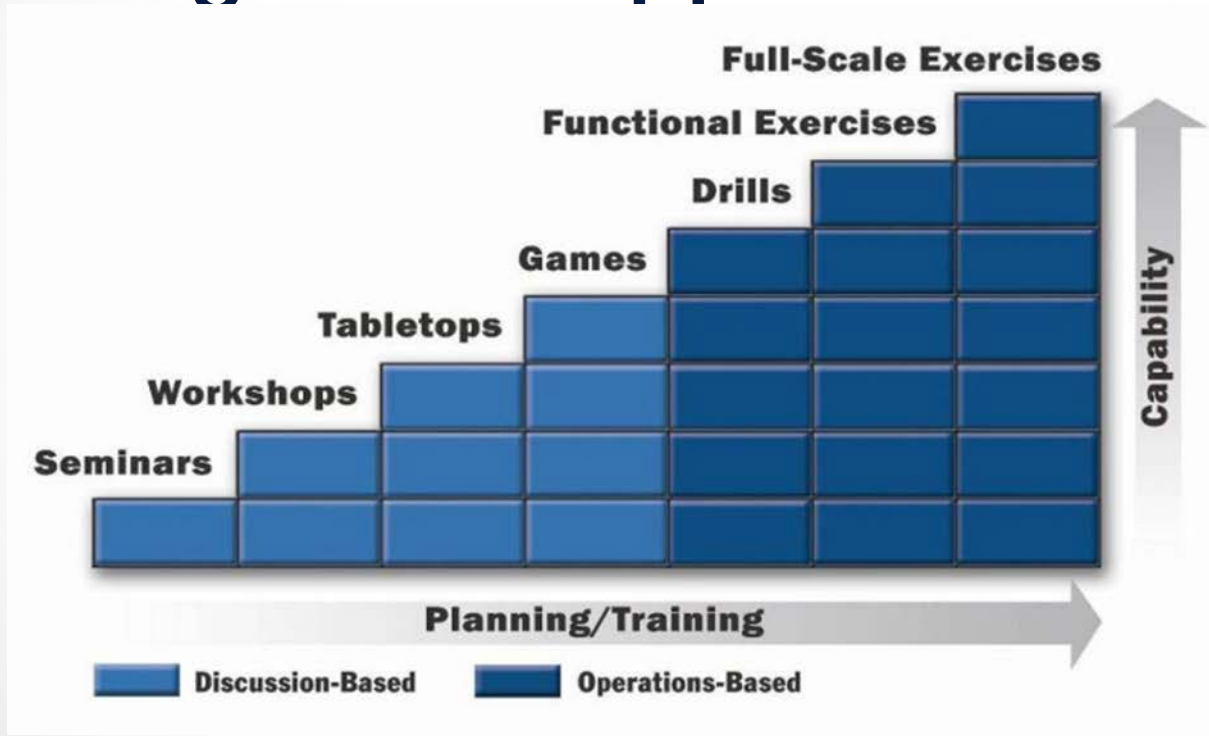


# Exercise Types

- **Discussion Based:**
  - Ideal to help familiarize participants with plans, policies, procedures, and/or agreements.
  - Allows participants to contemplate/practice their response approach in a static environment.
  - Encourages different perspectives and information sharing.
- **Operations Based:**
  - Ideal to validate plans, policies, procedures, and/or agreements in a dynamic environment.
  - Allows participants to test their response approach under realistic but still simulated conditions.



# Building Block Approach

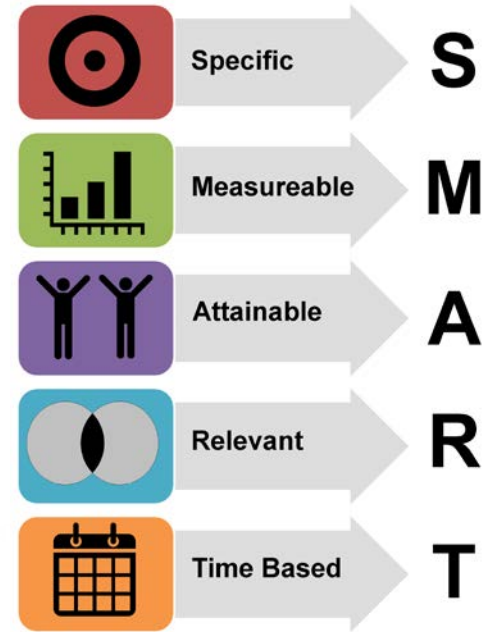


# Determine Exercise Objectives

- What is the foundation for the exercise?
  - Threats and Hazards
  - Previous incidents/areas for improvement
  - Previous exercises
  - New staff/equipment/processes
  - Required for funding

## Objectives should:

- Be “SMART”
- Actionable
- Achievable



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# Core Capabilities

- Capabilities-based planning takes an all-hazards approach to build capabilities that apply to a wide variety of incidents.
- The National Preparedness Goal outlines these areas into 32 Core Capabilities.
- Communication elements often appear in these capabilities:
  - Public information and Warning
  - Operational Coordination
  - Operational Communications
  - Planning



# Public Information and Warning

What do these have in common?

- Television
- Radio
- Email
- Social Media
- Text Messaging
- Web-based applications (MI CIMS)

- (Hint: POWER)

What to do when normal processes fail:

- Print
- 800 MHz
- AuxComm
- Physical “Runners”
- Others?



# Operational Coordination

- The right people/enough people involved
- Working together
  - Sharing information with all stakeholders.
  - Not in silos
- Obtaining resources:
  - Locally
  - State
  - Federal
- Exercise with mutual aid partners, customers, suppliers, and service providers.



# Operational Communication

- Ensure:
  - Timely communications with the correct audience.
  - Situational awareness for all stakeholders.
  - Maintain communications in the event of damage to, or destruction of, the primary infrastructure.
- ... **by any and all means available**, among and between affected communities in the impact area and all response forces.



# Planning

- Exercises can identify areas for improvement for:
  - Emergency Operations Plans (EOP)
  - Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plans
  - Continuity of Government (COG)
  - Contact Lists
  - Job Aids
  - Training Plans
  - Other Ideas?



# Communications to Test

- What to test?
  - Back-up Plans
  - Back-up Systems
  - Back-up Personnel
  - Communication Degradation
  - Continuity of Operations (COOP) Plan
  - Storm Plans
- Locations to include:
  - Dispatch
  - Emergency Operations Centers
  - External Media partners



# Scenario Development

- Scenario should be:
  - Realistic
  - Plausible
  - Challenging
- Scenario should contain:
  - General context (“story”).
  - Conditions which allow players to work towards meeting objectives.
  - Technical details necessary but not overwhelming.
- Advise players to focus on the response, not “how we got here” – time jumps and assumptions may be necessary to keep the exercise moving.



# TTX Discussion Questions

Provide questions to facilitate discussion and to address exercise goals.

## Examples:

1. At what point, if any, do you stop operations and close down until power is restored?
2. Do you currently have plans/procedures in place that address a long-term power outage?
3. Would you have any security issues at this point?
4. What are your options for communication if cellular phones and Internet are unavailable?
5. What local, state, federal, and private sector resources would you look to procure?  
(Who would you work with to procure these resources?)





# Evaluations/After-Action Report/ Improvement Planning

- Assign evaluators to capture strengths and areas for improvement.
  - Utilize Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEG).
- After-Action Report (AAR)/Improvement Plan (IP):
  - Written report of relevant exercise findings.
  - Comprehensive analysis of successes and gaps including recommendations.
  - Develop a matrix of identified gaps, recommendations, assigned individuals/agencies, and timeline for correction.



# Evaluations/After-Action Report/ Improvement Planning (cont.)

- Conduct AAR meeting with planning team to de-conflict findings.
- Assignment meetings with people responsible for IP.
- Track and test improvements in next exercise cycle.



# Recent Exercises

## Statewide Exercise 2017

- Overview

- Widespread power outage affecting the entire state of Michigan and FEMA Region V.
- 3 days, 18 state agencies, 7 counties, 30 private sector partners.
- SimCell making calls, sending emails, entering resource requests.
- National Guard exercises at various locations alongside state play.

- Communication Findings

- Assumption was that all SEOC systems worked.
- Did not test emergency communications systems.
- Did not actively address simulated loss of voice communications.
- Did not play out the loss of computer-based systems.
- Testing of radios and availability of paper forms did not take place.
- COOP plans were not utilized or actively discussed.



# Recent Exercises

## Private Sector Exercise 2017

- Overview

- Three large companies exercised from their respective facilities.
- Participants from private businesses, state and local law enforcement, government regulatory board, licensing.
- Threat affected public highways and internal, general public customers.

- Communication Findings

- Radio training needed for staff.
- Landline was not operational in critical office.
- No central place to share information across sectors (e.g., MI CIMS).
- Implementing “lunch and learn” training, relationship building, sharing best practices.
- Updates needed for contact lists, as well as schedule for updating the list.



# Recent Exercises

## State of Michigan Cyber TTX 2017

- Overview

- Annual exercise hosted by Michigan State Police and Department of Technology, Management and Budget.
- 125 attendees from various sectors.
- Scenario: Cyber-attack on public safety answering points (PSAP), state and private network, cellular networks, and Internet service providers.

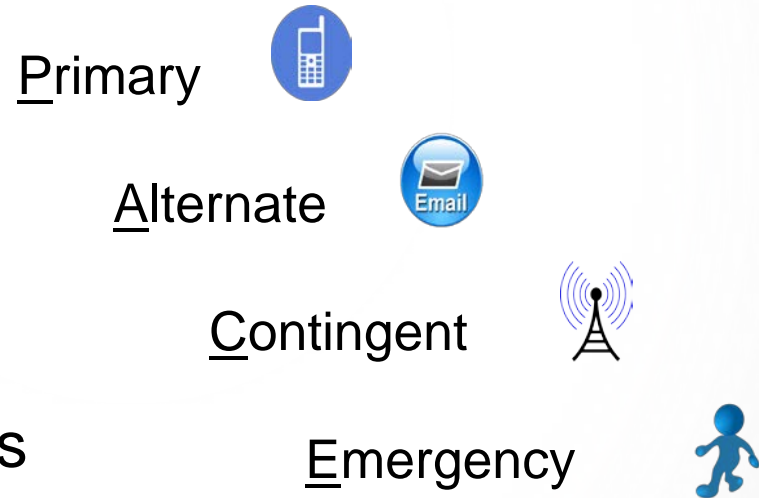
- Communication Findings

- Need to expand the number of schools and universities on the 800 MHz system.
- Training on COOP and emergency plans is needed across sectors at all levels.
- Need for task forces to address alternative ways for sharing information when offline.
- Clarification is needed on the process and funding source to replace damaged equipment.



# Future Exercises

- Take web applications offline:
  - MI CIMS
  - Email
  - Other applications
  - Critical software?
- Turn off cellular phones for exercise use.
- Encourage the use of PACE as events unfold.



# Next Steps Exercise

- Conversations
  - “What if...”
- COOP plan training/updates
  - Does your organization have a plan?
  - When was the last time it was exercised?
- Exercise Ideas:
  - Threats and hazards facing your organization
  - Real world events?
  - Objectives
  - Scenario



# Thank you!

## Contact Information

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