

UNIT 9. TRAINING AND EXERCISING AT THE EOC


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INTRODUCTION

Visual 9.1

**Unit 9:
Training and
Exercising at the
EOC**



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Visual 9.1
EOC Management and Operations (G0775)

Key Points

This unit provides information about training and exercising at the EOC.

INTRODUCTION

Visual 9.2

Unit 9 Objectives

- Define key terminology related to training and exercising.
- Indicate how the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) contributes to an effective training and exercise program.
- Explain how training and exercises are used to enhance EOC operations.
- Select the types of training and exercises that are appropriate to given scenarios at an EOC.



Key Points


At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- Define key terminology related to training and exercising.
- Indicate how the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) contributes to an effective training and exercise program.
- Explain how training and exercises are used to enhance EOC operations.
- Select the types of training and exercises that are appropriate to given scenarios at an EOC.


TRAINING AND EXERCISES OVERVIEW

Visual 9.3

Training and Exercises (T&E)



Training and exercises (T&E) are opportunities to learn, practice, and test the capabilities needed by an EOC to support response and recovery throughout an incident.

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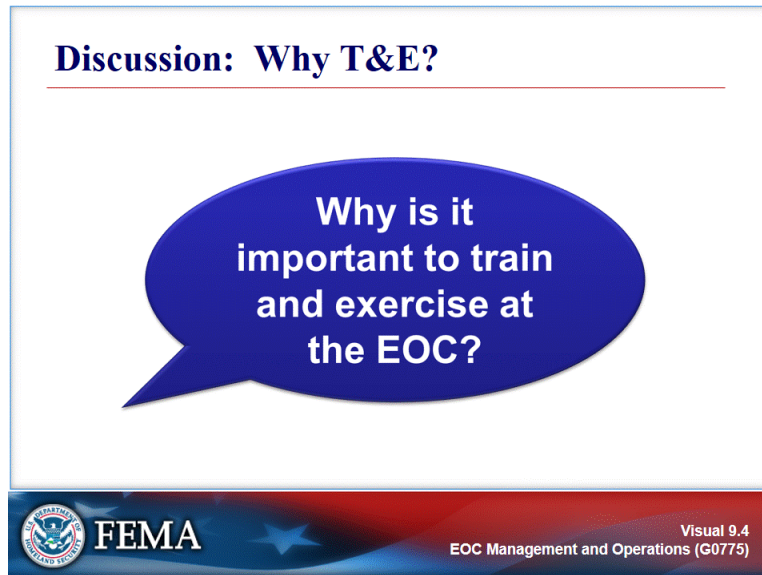
Visual 9.3
EOC Management and Operations (G0775)

Key Points

Training and exercises are opportunities for EOC personnel to learn, practice, and test the capabilities they will need to support response and recovery throughout an incident.

TRAINING AND EXERCISES OVERVIEW

Visual 9.4

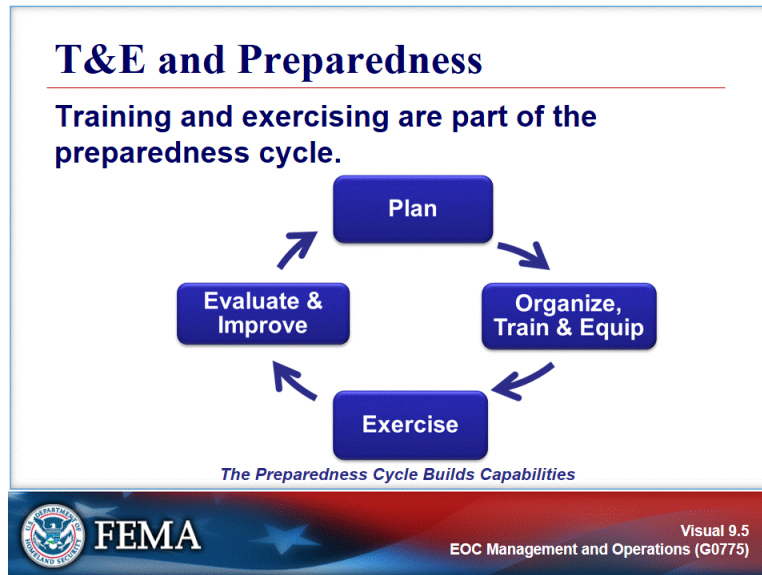


Key Points

Discussion Question: Why is it important to train and exercise at the EOC?

TRAINING AND EXERCISES OVERVIEW

Visual 9.5



Key Points

Preparedness requires a continuous cycle of planning, organizing, training, equipping, exercising, evaluating, and taking corrective action.

Ongoing preparedness efforts among all those involved in emergency management and incident response activities—including those at the EOC—ensure coordination during times of crisis.

Moreover, preparedness facilitates efficient and effective emergency management and incident response activities.


HOMELAND SECURITY EXERCISE AND EVALUATION PROGRAM (HSEEP)


Visual 9.6

HSEEP

The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) provides:

- A common T&E policy and program guidance.
- Consistent terminology that can be used and understood.
- Tools to plan, conduct, and evaluate exercises to improve overall preparedness.
- A national standard for all exercises.



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Visual 9.6
EOC Management and Operations (G775)

Key Points

The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) provides:

- A common exercise policy and program guidance.
- Consistent terminology that can be used and understood.
- Tools to plan, conduct, and evaluate exercises to improve overall preparedness.
- A national standard for all exercises.

This blended approach to HSEEP implementation promotes exercise expertise, while advancing a standardized means of assessing and improving preparedness across the Nation.

HSEEP promulgates standardized terminology usable by responders at all levels of government. Therefore, HSEEP provides the Nation with a common, consistent platform for its homeland security exercise needs.

HSEEP constitutes a national standard for all exercises and helps organizations objectively exercise and evaluate their capabilities. HSEEP resources available at the Department of Homeland Security Web site include the Training and Exercise Plan Workshop User's Handbook, and Exercise Evaluation Guides.

HOMELAND SECURITY EXERCISE AND EVALUATION PROGRAM (HSEEP)

Visual 9.7

HSEEP Strategy

HSEEP uses a capabilities-based approach toward:

- Individual exercises.
- Exercise program management.

For more information:
<http://www.hseep.dhs.gov>



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Visual 9.7
EOC Management and Operations (G0775)

Key Points

In addition to providing a standard policy, guidance, methodology, and language for program and project management, HSEEP facilitates the creation of self-sustaining, capabilities-based exercise programs by providing program management resources including:

- Guidance,
- Training,
- Technology, and
- Direct support.

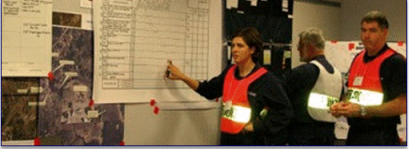
By using a blended approach, HSEEP ensures that jurisdictions at all levels of government have the tools they need to implement their doctrine and policy successfully.


CAPABILITIES-BASED T&E

Visual 9.8

Why Capabilities-Based?

- Personnel can directly practice their roles.
- Jurisdictions can measure their actual capabilities in specified areas.
- Jurisdictions can improve their overall emergency management systems.



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EOC Management and Operations (G0775)

Key Points

There are three overarching benefits to a capabilities-based exercise program:

- Personnel have an opportunity to practice their roles and responsibilities and get better at them.
- Jurisdictions can measure their actual capabilities in specified areas.
- Jurisdictions can improve their overall emergency management systems.


These benefits arise not only from the exercises, but from evaluating the exercises and acting on the lessons learned. Exercises have value only when they lead to improvement.

The focus of any exercise should be on identifying and eliminating problems before an actual emergency occurs. Corrective actions are an important part of exercise design, evaluation, and followup.

CAPABILITIES-BASED T&E

Visual 9.9

More Benefits of Capabilities-Based



- Identifying planning weaknesses
- Improving coordination and communication
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities
- Revealing resource gaps
- Gaining public support
- Encouraging EOC team building

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Visual 9.9
EOC Management and Operations (G0775)

Key Points

Exercises provide other benefits as well. They help to:

- Identify weaknesses in the planned systems and procedures.
- Improve coordination and communication among the various response partners.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities.
- Reveal resource gaps that may not be apparent until processes are put to the test.
- Gain public support and improve public confidence in the jurisdiction's ability to respond to emergencies.
- Build a sense of teamwork among EOC personnel.

T&E PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

Visual 9.10

An Effective T&E Program

- Provides training in the appropriate functional areas of mission readiness.
- Provides opportunities to acquire and apply the skills and knowledge needed for EOC operations.
- Promotes team building.
- Builds EOC confidence.
- Assists in developing community resilience.



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Visual 9.10
EOC Management and Operations (G0775)

Key Points


Effective training and exercise programs share several common attributes in that they:

- Provide the right kind of training for EOC personnel. The right kind of training will provide the skills and knowledge required to perform the assigned functions in an emergency environment.
- Allow EOC personnel to apply the skills and knowledge they gained in training.
- Create sufficient and meaningful opportunities for team members to work together and in so doing build their confidence in what can be accomplished by the team effort.
- Help develop community resilience by strengthening the capabilities of those who coordinate the response.

T&E PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS


Visual 9.11

EOC Mission Readiness



To achieve the goal of mission readiness for your EOC, T&E should:

- Be comprehensive.
- Ensure consistency from one incident to the next.
- Reflect lessons learned.
- Focus on common goals of EOC staff and community leaders.

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Visual 9.11
EOC Management and Operations (G0775)

Key Points

The training and exercise program should be a blend of training and exercise events to ensure that personnel interest levels are maintained and that all bases are covered. The program should always present current, credible information.

To achieve the goal of mission readiness through training and exercising, the program should:


- Be comprehensive in that it includes both components—training and exercises. Both are important and will contribute in different ways to the development of EOC readiness.
- Provide a framework for readiness activities that will ensure consistency and uniformity.
- Reflect lessons learned from previous T&E events and actual emergencies.
- Focus on common goals of the various EOC staff and community leaders, which lead to a sense of commitment and investment and greater overall success of the program.


TRAINING


Visual 9.12

Training

- Training is instruction in core competencies and skills.
- Training provides the tools needed to:
 - Accomplish a goal.
 - Meet program requirements.
 - Acquire a specific capability.



 Review the Training Job Aid in Appendix 9.1.

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Visual 9.12
EOC Management and Operations (G0775)

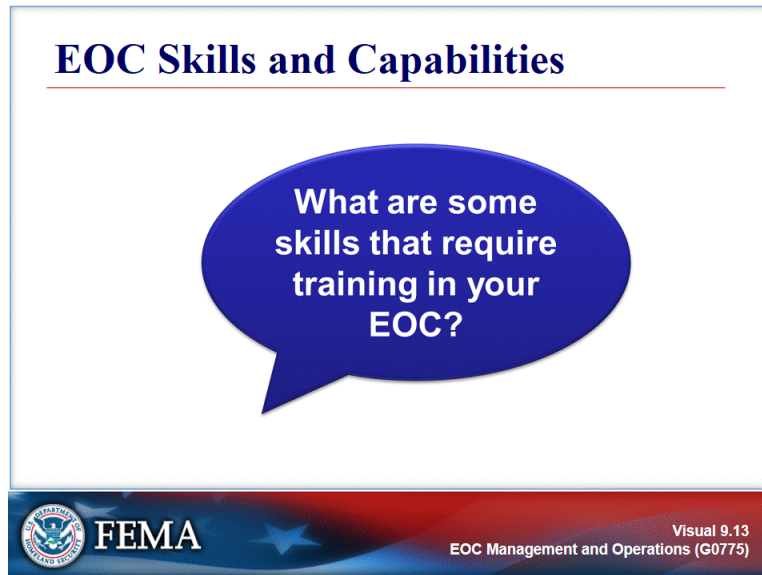
Key Points

Training is instruction in core competencies and skills and is the principal means by which individuals achieve a level of proficiency. Training provides the tools needed to accomplish a goal, meet program requirements, or acquire a specified capability.

Training encompasses a range of activities. The common thread among these different activities is their purpose. All provide information or refine skills.

TRAINING

Visual 9.13




Key Points

Discussion Question: What are some skills that require training in your EOC?


EXERCISES

Visual 9.14

Exercises



Exercises are events that allow participants to train for, assess, practice, and improve performance in a risk-free environment.



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Visual 9.14
EOC Management and Operations (G0775)

Key Points

Exercises are events that allow participants to train for, assess, practice, and improve performance in prevention, protection, response, and recovery capabilities in a risk-free environment. The primary purpose of an exercise is to identify areas that require additional training, planning, or other resources, with the goal of improving the jurisdiction's mission capability.

An exercise should provide the opportunity to determine whether:

- Policies and procedures are effective.
- Training is up to standard.
- Adequate resources have been provided and used to help the team implement its mission at the EOC.


From an emergency operations perspective, exercises are an excellent way to evaluate functions, such as:


- Communications
- Alert and notification
- Deployment
- Redundancy
- Procedural and Policy

EXERCISES

Visual 9.15

Exercise Types	
Discussion-Based	Operations-Based
Seminar	Drill*
Workshop	Functional*
Tabletop*	Full-Scale
Game	
*Best suited for EOC exercises	

 Review the Exercise Job Aid in Appendix 9.2. Notice the characteristics and recommended uses of each type.

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Visual 9.15
EOC Management and Operations (G0775)

Key Points

There are two broad categories of exercises—discussion-based and operations-based. Within those categories—there are seven exercise types:

- **Discussion-based exercises** encompass:
 - Seminars, which are used to familiarize players with current plans, policies, agreements, and procedures.
 - Workshops, which are used to achieve a specific goal or to build a product (e.g., SOPs, policies, or plans).
 - Tabletop Exercises, which help senior officials to understand and assess plans, policies, procedures, and concepts.
 - Games, which are used to explore decisionmaking processes and examine the consequences of those decisions.
- **Operations-based exercises**, which are at the higher level of the exercise program. Operations-based exercises include:
 - Drills, which are used to test a single operation or function.
 - Functional exercises, which test and evaluate capabilities, functions, plans, and staffs in real-time.
 - Full-scale exercises, which are used to implement and analyze plans, policies, procedures, and cooperative agreements developed in previous exercises.

SELECTING EXERCISES APPROPRIATE FOR THE SITUATION


Visual 9.16

T&E: Class Discussion (1 of 3)

Scenario: Your jurisdiction is planning an exercise to see how long it takes for all personnel to report to the alternate EOC and become fully operational from a "warm start."*

What kind of exercise would you plan?

*Warm start means some events and actions have already occurred and time has advanced since the event began.



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Visual 9.16
EOC Management and Operations (G0775)

Key Points

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Discussion Question: What kind of exercise would you plan?

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SELECTING EXERCISES APPROPRIATE FOR THE SITUATION

Visual 9.17

T&E: Class Discussion (2 of 3)

Scenario: Your jurisdiction has recently updated its Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). As part of that process, several new policies were implemented to streamline decisionmaking when the EOC is activated. You want to conduct a preliminary evaluation of whether or not the policies work.

What kind of exercise would you plan?

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Key Points

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Discussion Question: What kind of exercise would you plan?


SELECTING EXERCISES APPROPRIATE FOR THE SITUATION

Visual 9.18

T&E: Class Discussion (3 of 3)

Scenario: Your jurisdiction has recently purchased a new communications system. The system facilitates interoperability but is more complex than the jurisdiction's previous system. Training is complete, and the equipment has been tested. You want to test the overall communications function to see how well it performs in real-time.

What kind of exercise would you plan?

The slide footer features the FEMA logo on the left, which includes the text 'FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY' around a central emblem. To the right of the logo is the text 'FEMA'. Further right, there is a blue star graphic. On the far right of the footer, the text reads 'Visual 9.18' and 'EOC Management and Operations (G0775)'.

Key Points


Scenario: Your jurisdiction has recently purchased a new communications system. The system facilitates interoperability but is more complex than the jurisdiction's previous system. Training is complete, and the equipment has been tested. You want to test the overall communications function to see how well it performs in real-time.

Discussion Question: What kind of exercise would you plan?

EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT


Visual 9.19

After Exercising



An evaluation should be conducted after **every** exercise and should include:

- A hot wash that allows participants an opportunity to evaluate themselves.
- A debriefing for facilitators and evaluators.

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Visual 9.19
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Key Points

Evaluation is the process of observing and recording exercise activities, comparing the performance of the participants against the objectives, and identifying strengths and weaknesses. Evaluation and a debriefing should be conducted after every exercise and should include:

- A “hot wash,” or debrief, which gives participants an opportunity to evaluate themselves—the positive and the negative. Hot washes should be conducted immediately after the action, while memories are fresh.
- A debriefing for facilitators and evaluators, which includes reviewing evaluations and hot wash notes.

Observations and thoughts about the exercise collected from participants, facilitators, and evaluators can help identify:

- Whether the exercise has achieved its objectives.
- Needed improvements in the EOP, procedures, and/or guidelines.
- Training deficiencies.
- Equipment and materials needed for incident response.

EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

Visual 9.20

Improvement Planning



Following exercises, the exercise planning team should:

- Develop an after-action report.
- Develop an improvement plan: concrete, measurable steps for improvement.
- Delegate responsibilities and actions.
- Set up a timetable for completion.
- Track the process.

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Visual 9.20
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Key Points

Immediately after an exercise, the exercise planning team should:

- Develop an after-action report.
- Develop an improvement plan—concrete, measurable steps for improvement.
- Delegate responsibilities and actions.
- Set up a timetable for completion.
- Track the process.

Conducting evaluations and debriefs enables the planning team to capture information about events while they are still fresh in the players' minds. The exercise planning team collects feedback and notes from evaluators and participants to generate the after-action report and improvement plan (AAR/IP).


SUMMARY

Visual 9.21

Video: The Value of Training

As a public official, briefly describe how your constituents were helped by enabling a strategic response to this disaster.

Click image to play video.



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Key Points

Before completing this unit, let's hear what the Mayor of Nashville has to say about the value of training.

Video Transcript:

Question: As a public official, briefly describe how your constituents were helped by enabling a strategic response to this disaster.

Mayor Dean: Well I think by having a strategic response and having our folks trained in advance that, you don't know for certain but I'm assuming that lives were saved as a result of it. One of the things that is interesting, that we sent about somewhere over 60 people, 60-65 people to Emmitsburg, Maryland I believe, prior to the flood to participate in a FEMA training program. The two areas we talk about the most in Tennessee, in middle Tennessee before this flood occurred, in terms of natural disasters are tornados, and there had been a lot of attention paid to a possible pandemic that medical issues and the need to disperse medicines rapidly. But when they went, when this group of 60+ folks went up to Maryland, the problem they looked at and trained under for was a flood. So I can't think of a better training exercise for our people to go through before the situation occurred.

SUMMARY

Visual 9.22

Unit 9 Summary

We discussed:

- Key terminology related to training and exercising.
- Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).
- Training and exercises as a means used to ensure effective EOC operations.
- Types of training and exercises that are appropriate to given scenarios.



Key Points

This unit covered the following topics:

- Key terminology related to training and exercising.
- Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).
- Training and exercises as a means used to ensure effective EOC operations.
- Types of training and exercises that are appropriate to given scenarios.