



Virginia Department of Corrections

Emergency Management

Operating Procedure 075.6

Critical Incident Management Exercises

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REVIEW

The Content Owner will review this operating procedure annually and re-write it no later than three years after the effective date.

The content owner reviewed this operating procedure in November 2023 and determined that no changes are needed.

The content owner reviewed this operating procedure in November 2024 and determined that no changes are needed.

COMPLIANCE

This operating procedure applies to all units operated by the Virginia Department of Corrections (DOC). Practices and procedures must comply with applicable State and Federal laws and regulations, American Correctional Association (ACA) standards, Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards, and DOC directives and operating procedures.

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DEFINITIONS

Actor or Simulator - Individuals responsible for simulating a specific role in an exercise.

After Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) - The main product of the evaluation and improvement planning process. The AAR/IP has two components an after action report that captures the observations of an exercise and makes recommendations for post-exercise improvements and an improvement plan that identifies specific corrective actions, assigns them to responsible parties, and establishes targets for their completion.

Community Corrections Alternative Program (CCAP) - A system of residential facilities operated by the Department of Corrections to provide evidence-based programming as a diversionary alternative to incarceration in accordance with COV §53.1-67.9, *Establishment of community corrections alternative program; supervision upon completion.*

Control Staff - The exercise design team and other individuals designated as controllers and facilitators during the exercise.

Control Staff Instruction Manual (COSIN) - The document developed by the exercise design team based on the *Exercise Plan* to provide the detailed sequence and timing of exercise events beginning with any pre-exercise briefing and continuing through the exercise and “hot wash” critique session; the COSIN should include necessary forms for participant critique and evaluation of exercise objectives.

Controller - Individual who manages and directs the pace of exercise play, issues exercise materials to players as required, monitors the exercise timeline, and monitors the safety of all exercise participants; controllers are the only participants who should provide information or direction to players.

Debrief - A forum for planners, facilitators, controllers, and evaluators to review and provide feedback after the exercise is conducted. The debrief should be a facilitated discussion that allows each individual an opportunity to provide an overview of the functional area they observed and document strengths and areas for improvement.

Evaluation of Exercise Objectives - A document included in the *Control Staff Instruction Manual (COSIN)* and completed by each evaluator that lists each objective and provides for the evaluator to record observations of each critical task.

Evaluator - A member of the control staff or other person designated to monitor the exercise and determine whether the exercise objectives were met.

Exercise Design Team - Individuals designated to develop the *Exercise Plan*, *Control Staff Instruction Manual*, control the operation of the exercise, and compile the *After Action Report/Improvement Plan*.

Exercise Plan (EXPLAN) - The document developed by the exercise design team to describe the type and scope of the exercise, the exercise objectives, and general exercise scenario.

Facilitator - During an exercise, the facilitator is responsible for keeping participant activities on track with the exercise design objectives and making sure all issues and objectives are explored as thoroughly as possible within the time constraints.

Full-Scale Exercise (FSE) - An activity involving the actual deployment of resources, in a coordinated response, as if a real incident had occurred. A FSE tests many components of one or more capabilities within emergency response and recovery, and is typically used to assess plans, procedures, and coordinated response under crisis conditions. Characteristics of a FSE include mobilized units, personnel, and equipment; a stressful, realistic environment; and scripted exercise scenarios.

Functional Exercise (FE) - An activity designed to evaluate capabilities and multiple functions using a simulated response. A FE is typically used to evaluate the management of Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs), command posts, and headquarters; and assess the adequacy of response plans and resources. Characteristics of a FE include simulated deployment of resources and personnel, rapid problem solving, and a highly stressful environment.

Hot Wash - A debriefing session held immediately at the conclusion of a critical incident or exercise to capture the observations and reactions of participants.

Incident Command Center - The location from which the Incident Commander oversees all incident operations. This center should be located outside the present and potential hazard zone but close enough to the incident to

maintain control. Access should be restricted and limited to maintain an effective span of control for the Incident Commander.

Incident Command System (ICS) - Nationally standard management hierarchy and procedures for managing temporary incidents of any size.

Inmate - A person who is incarcerated in a Virginia Department of Corrections facility or who is Virginia Department of Corrections responsible to serve a state sentence.

Objectives - Those critical incident management functions that the exercise is designed to evaluate; objectives should be simple, measurable, achievable, realistic, and task-oriented (SMART). Planners should limit the number of exercise objectives to facilitate the design of a realistic scenario and to allow for timely execution. Each objective should be split into at least three critical tasks that must be accomplished for the objective to be achieved.

Participant Critique - A document included in the *Control Staff Instruction Manual*.

Participants - All individuals involved in the exercise to include actor or simulator, controller, control staff, evaluator, exercise design team, facilitator, observers, and players.

Players - Individuals who have an active role in preventing, responding to, or recovering from the risks and hazards presented in the exercise scenario, by either discussing, in a discussion-based exercise, or performing, in an operations-based exercise, their regular roles and responsibilities; players initiate actions that will respond to and/or mitigate the simulated emergency.

Probationer/Parolee - A person who is on community supervision as the result of the commission of a criminal offense and released to the community under the jurisdiction of Courts, paroling authorities, the Virginia Department of Corrections, or other release authority; this includes post release supervision and Community Corrections Alternative Programs.

Prompt - A pre-scripted scenario event provided by an exercise controller to drive exercise play towards the achievement of objectives; prompts may alter the context of the scenario by bringing in new factors not originally considered or it may guide the exercise toward achieving the objective by providing information not necessary to the original scenario.

Scenario - Provides the backdrop and storyline that drive an exercise.

Scope (Exercise) - An indicator of the level of participation in exercise play, regardless of participant size; scope levels include: local, multi-local, regional (within a State), State, multi-State, Federal, national, international, and private sector.

Tabletop Exercise (TTX) - An exercise intended to stimulate discussion of issues regarding a hypothetical situation; A TTX can be used to assess plans, policies, and procedures or to assess types of systems needed to guide the prevention of, response to, or recovery from a defined incident.

PURPOSE

This operating procedure provides for an exercise program to improve the operational readiness of the emergency management system in each facility and office operated by the Department of Corrections (DOC).

PROCEDURE

- I. Critical Incident Management Exercise Program
 - A. The DOC critical incident management exercise program is based on the *Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP)*.
 - B. The primary purpose of an exercise program is to improve the operational readiness of the emergency management system. When improvements are viewed as the overall goal, exercises can:
 1. Reveal planning strengths and weaknesses
 2. Identify resource needs
 3. Identify training needs
 4. Improve coordination
 5. Clarify roles and responsibilities
 6. Gain recognition of the emergency management program
 7. Motivate officials to support the emergency management program
 8. Validate plans and systems in “live” situations
 9. Foster cooperation among government agencies and the private sector
 10. Increase awareness of proficiency and needs
 - C. An effective critical incident management exercise program will assess each facility and office’s *Emergency Operations Plan* and *Continuity of Operations Plan*; see Operating Procedure 075.1, *Emergency Operations Plan*, and Operating Procedure 075.2, *Continuity of Operations Plan*.
 - D. Each facility and office’s critical incident management exercise program will be based on local critical incidents that are likely to occur; see Operating Procedure 075.1, Attachment 1, *Critical Incident Initial Response Checklists*.
 - E. Staff can find additional information about critical incident management exercises on the *Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program* internet site or by contacting the Major of the Extradition, Fugitive & Emergency Services Unit at 804-239-9629.
- II. Exercise Management Cycle
 - A. Exercise management includes specific functions in order for the DOC to sustain a variety of exercises targeted toward preparedness priorities on an ongoing basis.
 - B. Exercises conducted in accordance with the five phases of the exercise cycle lead to tangible preparedness improvements.
 - C. The five phases of the exercise cycle are:
 1. Foundation - Staff must accomplish the following in order to provide the foundation for an effective exercise:
 - a. Create a base of support i.e., establish buy-in from the appropriate entities and/or senior officials.
 - b. Develop an exercise management timeline and establish milestones.
 - c. Identify an exercise planning team and schedule planning sessions.
 2. Design and Development - Building on the exercise foundation, the design and development process



focuses on:

- a. Identifying objectives
 - b. Designing the scenario - Staff should design a scenario from any of the three major hazard categories based on the potential for a local occurrence of that hazard.
 - i. Natural hazards such as flood, tornado, wild fire, drought, or winter storm.
 - ii. Technological hazards such as utilities failure, hazardous materials spill, or radiological release.
 - iii. Security/Terrorism Hazards such as escape, riot, hostage, fire, or staff shortage.
 - c. Creating documentation
 - d. Coordinating logistics
 - e. Planning exercise conduct
 - f. Selecting an evaluation and improvement methodology
3. Conduct - After the design and development steps are complete, the exercise takes place and includes:
- a. Setup
 - b. Briefings
 - c. Facilitation/control/evaluation
 - d. Wrap-up activities
4. Evaluation - The evaluation phase for all exercises includes:
- a. A formal exercise evaluation
 - b. An integrated analysis
 - c. An AAR/IP that identifies strengths and areas for improvement in the facility or office's preparedness as observed by the evaluators during the exercise, identifies areas for improvement, and provides recommendations to help develop corrective actions to be tracked throughout the improvement planning phase.
5. Improvement Planning - During improvement planning, the areas of improvement and recommendations from the evaluation phase are assigned to responsible staff for corrective action with corresponding due dates, tracked to implementation of the corrective action, and then validated during subsequent exercises.

III. Objectives

Staff must choose the exercise objectives from the following:

A. Mandatory Objectives for All Exercises

1. Direction and Control - Demonstrate the ability to direct, coordinate, and control critical incident response activities through operation of an Incident Command System (ICS), *Emergency Operations Plans*, and *Continuity of Operations Plan*.
2. Accountability of Staff, Inmates, and Probationers/Parolees - Demonstrate the ability to account for staff, inmates, and probationers/parolees. In facilities, implement a critical incident count of inmates or CCAP probationers/parolees and their locations.
3. Documentation of a Critical Incident - Demonstrate the ability to document a critical incident and response.

B. Optional Objectives

1. Demonstrate the ability to identify the critical incident and to assess the hazards associated during the emergency and post-emergency phases.
2. Demonstrate the ability to implement appropriate measures for containment, recovery, and cleanup of a critical incident.



3. Demonstrate the ability to notify appropriate personnel and agencies, and to mobilize personnel.
4. Demonstrate the ability to mobilize and manage resources required for critical incident response.
5. Demonstrate the ability to establish and maintain communications essential to support response to a critical incident.
6. Demonstrate the adequacy of facilities, equipment, and other materials to support critical incident operations.
7. Demonstrate the ability to signal an alert and to provide emergency notifications containing information and instructions to staff.
8. Demonstrate the ability to coordinate the development and dissemination of clear, accurate, and timely information up the chain of command.
9. Demonstrate the ability to decide upon and direct the implementation of protective actions for staff, inmates, and probationers/parolees.
10. Demonstrate the ability to protect critical incident responder health and safety.
11. Demonstrate the organizational ability and resources necessary to implement site security and to control evacuation traffic flow and access to evacuated and sheltered areas.
12. Demonstrate the ability to monitor and control decontamination of persons affected through an appropriate combination of the screening, decontamination, and registration process.
13. Demonstrate the adequacy of procedures, facilities, equipment, and services for the collective care of staff, inmates, and probationers/parolees.
14. Demonstrate the adequacy of personnel, procedures, equipment, and vehicles for transporting contaminated and/or injured individuals, and the adequacy of medical personnel and facilities to support the operation.

IV. Exercise Types

A. Tabletop Exercises (TTX)

1. TTXs are designed to assess the adequacy of the *Emergency Operations Plan, Continuity of Operations Plan*, policies, procedures, training, resources, and relationships or agreements that guide the prevention or response to critical incidents.
 - a. A group of officials from various departments, facilities, agencies, etc., accomplishes this assessment by talking through how they would respond to a simulated critical incident.
 - b. In a typical TTX, players are presented with a scenario and provided information that would be available prior to, during, and following a critical incident.
 - c. Players discuss the plans, policies, procedures, resources, and agreements that are in place to respond to the scenario and the problems presented by a facilitator.
 - d. The group discusses the problems and generally agrees on a resolution that the leader will summarize.
 - e. In more advanced TTXs, players receive prompts that alter the original scenario.
2. A TTX will test at a minimum:
 - a. Direction and control
 - b. Accountability of staff, inmates, and probationers/parolees
 - c. Documentation of a critical incident
 - d. At least two optional objectives
3. Planners should place special emphasis on the objectives and typical steps or elements that support response and recovery operations for scenario selection and development.



4. Players in this exercise will be administrative officials, department heads or their representatives, and emergency managers. Other players may be from volunteer agencies, hospitals and nursing homes, media, private industry, National Guard, school systems, public safety instructors, regional hazardous materials teams, etc.
5. Preparation for a TTX will include the development of an *Exercise Plan (EXPLAN) 075_F9* and a *Control Staff Instruction Manual (COSIN) 075_F10*.
6. Planners should use the discussions and discoveries generated during a TTX to begin planning for the next logical step in the exercise program, the FE.

B. Functional Exercise (FE)

1. The FE is designed to test the *Emergency Operations Plan, Continuity of Operations Plan*, and to train individuals at the operational and policy level.
 - a. FE activities are generally restricted to one DOC Organizational Unit and may focus on one functional area within that unit. Depending on the extent of exercise activities, it may be necessary to notify outside agencies of the exercise activities.
 - b. The exercise should incorporate a hazard that is a realistic threat to the facility, office, or community and should include the testing of objectives identified as needing improvement on AAR/IPs from a previous exercise.
 - c. Individuals from various functional areas carrying out or simulating the actions they would take to respond to a simulated critical incident accomplish this assessment.
 - d. In a FE, the controller(s) present to players a scenario that provides information that would be available as an event evolves.
 - e. Players simulate the actions they would take using the plans, policies, procedures, resources, and agreements that are in place to respond to the scenario and the problems presented by the controller(s).
 - f. Players should be performing their regular roles and responsibilities based on their position and expertise.
 - g. In more advanced FEs, actors or simulators may have assignments that lend realism to or alter the original scenario.
2. A FE will test at a minimum:
 - a. Direction and control
 - b. Accountability of staff, inmates, and probationers/parolees
 - c. Documentation of a critical incident
 - d. At least three optional objectives
3. The exercise design team includes an exercise evaluation team, who are responsible for developing written evaluation tools, selecting and training evaluators, evaluating the exercise, and preparing a written post-exercise evaluation, which includes corrective action recommendations. Scenario selection and development should emphasize the functions that support recovery operations.
4. Preparation for a FE will include development of an *Exercise Plan (EXPLAN) 075_F9* and a *Control Staff Instruction Manual (COSIN) 075_F10*.

C. Full-Scale Exercise (FSE)

1. Due to the complexity and amount of resources involved, an FSE should be conducted only under the guidance and control of the Emergency Services Unit.
2. The FSE tests the operational capabilities of the *Emergency Operations Plan* and *Continuity of Operations Plan* over an extended period under simulated conditions.
 - a. A FSE will test multiple functions and provides training for several facilities and departments,



- including mutual aid agencies.
- b. This exercise trains individuals at the policy level in the use of the incident command center to coordinate and control resources.
 - c. FSEs should incorporate a hazard that is a realistic threat to the facility, office, or community and should include the testing of functions identified as needing improvement on AAR/IPs from a previous exercise or actual occurrence.
3. A FSE will include activation of an established incident command center consistent with the normal operating procedures that the DOC utilizes and under the principles of the ICS.
 4. A FSE should test at a minimum:
 - a. Direction and control
 - b. Accountability of staff, inmates, and probationers/parolees
 - c. Documentation of a critical incident
 - d. At least four optional objectives
 5. Planners should emphasize the functions that support recovery operations for scenario selection and development.
 6. The mobilization of operational field staff, as well as movement of staff, resources, and equipment, is an integral part of the FSE.
 - a. Planners should make every effort to create an environment for field staff that, as nearly as possible, recreates an actual incident.
 - b. The use of applying mock injuries, artificial smoke, actual transport vehicles, etc., is encouraged.
 - c. The use of emergency vehicle lights and sirens during the response to an FSE is discouraged for the safety of the responders and the citizens.
 7. Players in a FSE should not be members of the exercise design team.
 - a. The exercise design team may function as controllers, evaluators, and actors or simulators.
 - b. A Safety Officer(s) must be at each FSE to oversee the entire exercise and will have complete authority to terminate the exercise if an unsafe condition or actual emergency arises.
 - c. The exercise design team will also include an exercise evaluation team, who are responsible for developing written evaluation tools, selecting and training evaluators, evaluating the exercise, and preparing a written AAR/IP, which includes corrective action recommendations.
 8. Preparation for a FSE will include development of an *Exercise Plan (EXPLAN) 075_F9* and a *Control Staff Instruction Manual (COSIN) 075_F10*.

V. Minimum Exercise Requirements

A. Facilities

1. Once each quarter, each facility will test the callback system for:
 - a. Level II Special Response Team
 - b. Canine Officers, assigned to the facility
 - c. Critical Incident Negotiation Team Regional Coordinator
 - d. At Least 25% of remaining staff
2. Once each calendar quarter on each shift, each facility will:
 - a. Activate the ICS
 - b. Conduct an evacuation drill that covers all areas of the facility including administrative areas. The evacuation of inmates and CCAP probationers/parolees is not required in areas and conditions that pose a risk to security. (5-ACI-3B-11; 4-ACRS-1C-09)
 - c. Account for all staff, inmates, CCAP probationers/parolees and their locations.



3. Once each calendar year:
 - a. Conduct an exercise involving an external agency
 - b. Conduct a TTX activating all ICS General Staff level positions i.e., Operations Section Chief, Planning/Intelligence Section Chief, Logistics Section Chief, and Finance/Administration Section Chief; see Operating Procedure 075.1, *Emergency Operations Plan*.
 4. Health care staff will be included in facility emergency drills, as applicable. (5-ACI-6B-07)
- B. P&P and Administrative Offices, once per year, should conduct:
1. One emergency evacuation drill that covers all areas of the office including administrative areas (5-ACI-3B-11; 4-ACRS-1C-09)
 2. One other critical incident management exercise
- C. Facilities and offices are encouraged to plan exercises that cover more than one of the minimum exercise requirements, when practical.
- D. The Academy for Staff Development will hold four emergency evacuation drills per year.

VI. Pre-Exercise Requirements

- A. The Unit Head will submit a copy, electronic preferred, of the *Exercise Plan (EXPLAN) 075_F9* to any outside agency expected to actively participate in the exercise, the appropriate Regional Administrator, and the Emergency Services Unit Administrator at least 30 days prior to the exercise.
1. The Unit Head must also submit a copy of the *Control Staff Instruction Manual (COSIN) 075_F10* with the *Exercise Plan (EXPLAN) 075_F9* to the Emergency Services Unit Administrator at least 30 days prior to the exercise.
 2. The Emergency Services Unit Administrator must approve the EXPLAN and COSIN before the exercise can be conducted.
- B. The EXPLAN should include the :
1. Exercise Type
 2. Date, Time, and Location
 3. Exercise Scope
 4. Exercise Goals
 5. Mandatory and Optional Objectives to be Tested and the Critical Tasks for each Objective
 6. Agencies Expected to Participate
 7. Primary and Secondary Hazards
- C. The EXPLAN for a FSE should also include any significant simulations that will be used i.e., transport vehicles, smoke grenades, applying mock injuries, etc.

VII. During Exercise

- A. Tabletop Exercise
1. The facilitator(s) will provide prompts to the players to develop the scenario and guide the exercise in order to provide an opportunity for completion of the exercise objectives; see *Master Sequence of Events List* in the COSIN.
 2. The players will discuss each prompt and determine actions needed in response to each prompt.
 3. The evaluators will monitor player discussions and actions to determine the degree to which each critical task is accomplished.



B. Functional Exercise

1. The facilitator(s) will provide prompts to the players to develop the scenario and guide the exercise in order to provide an opportunity for completion of the exercise objectives; see *Master Sequence of Events List* in the COSIN. Facilitator(s) may be required in more than one location to direct different parts of the exercise.
2. The players will assume roles based on the ICS and act in those roles to direct the actions taken in response to each prompt.
 - a. Appropriate individuals should carry out those actions as directed.
 - b. Players may simulate some actions due to cost, safety, or security concerns.
3. The evaluators will monitor player actions to determine the degree to which each critical task is accomplished. Evaluators may be required in more than one location to evaluate different parts of the exercise.

C. Full-Scale Exercise

1. The facilitator(s) will provide prompts to the players to develop the scenario and guide the exercise in order to provide an opportunity for completion of the exercise objectives; see *Master Sequence of Events List* in the COSIN. Facilitator(s) may be required in more than one location to direct different parts of the exercise.
2. The players will assume roles based on the ICS and act in those roles to direct actions to be taken in response to each prompt.
 - a. Appropriate individuals should carry out those actions as directed.
 - b. Players may simulate some actions due to cost, safety, or security concerns.
3. FSEs will require activation of the incident command center and the activation of a field component to include movement of staff, equipment, and resources to simulate as close as possible an actual event.
4. The evaluators will monitor player actions to determine the degree to which each critical task is accomplished. Evaluators will be required in more than one location to evaluate different parts of the exercise.

VIII. Post-Exercise: After Action Report/Improvement Plan - All Exercises

- A. A hot wash should be held to solicit input from all individuals involved in the exercise immediately upon conclusion of the exercise.
 1. Each participant with a major role in the exercise should complete a *Participant Critique* to record their observations and reactions before participating in the hot wash; see *Control Staff Instruction Manual* (COSIN) 075_F10.
 2. Each evaluator should complete an *Evaluation of Exercise Objectives*. The *Evaluation of Exercise Objectives* should include each exercise objective and at least three critical tasks to measure each objective; see *Control Staff Instruction Manual* (COSIN) 075_F10.
- B. The exercise design team or designee will use information from participant logs completed during the exercise, evaluation data collected during the exercise, and minutes from the hot wash to generate the *After Action Report/Improvement Plan - Exercise 075_F11*.
- C. The Unit Head will submit an electronic copy of the *After Action Report/Improvement Plan 075_F11* to the appropriate Regional Administrator and the Emergency Services Unit Administrator within 30 days after the exercise. The *After Action Report/Improvement Plan 075_F11* should include:
 1. Exercise Type
 2. Date, Time, and Location
 3. Exercise Scope



4. Exercise Goals and Objectives
5. Participating Agencies
6. Primary and Secondary Hazards
7. Summary of Exercise Evaluations
8. Conclusions and Lessons learned
9. Improvement Plan

D. The Facility Unit Head will prioritize and initiate efforts to acquire equipment, supplies, or other resource needs identified on the *After Action Report/Improvement Plan 075_F11*.

REFERENCES

Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program

Operating Procedure 075.1, *Emergency Operations Plan*

Operating Procedure 075.2, *Continuity of Operations Plan*

ATTACHMENTS

None

FORM CITATIONS

Exercise Plan (EXPLAN) 075_F9

Control Staff Instruction Manual (COSIN) 075_F10

After Action Report/Improvement Plan - Exercise 075_F11

