

THE CIP REPORT

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION PROGRAM

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HOMELAND SECURITY EXERCISES

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This issue of *The CIP Report* provides an overview of homeland security exercises and how they are being conducted in the private and public sectors. Exercises are an important tool utilized to ensure the preparedness of our nation against terrorism, natural disasters, and other emergency situations. Exercises are conducted at all levels of government from federal to state to local. They help measure the efficiency of response plans already in place and identify where improvements or changes are necessary. There are different types of exercises, different models and tools used, but cooperation between the private and public sectors has led to an established framework for such exercises.

The Federal government has put in place a program to help guide exercises so that a standard exists and can be implemented when developing and carrying out these valuable efforts. An overview of this program, the Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP), is provided, as well as an article from Cubic Applications, Inc., that offers a look at how the private sector is aiding stakeholders in executing exercises and keeping them HSEEP compliant. We are also pleased to feature information on a tool helping to create realistic cyber exercise scenarios developed by Utah State University, Norwich University Applied Research Institutes, the Institute for Security Technology Studies at Dartmouth College, and Delta Risk, a private consulting firm.

In addition to these pieces we have also included a summary of Top Officials (TOPOFF) exercises, Congressionally-mandated exercises conducted in an effort to better prepare for terrorist attacks using weapons of mass destruction. The private-public partnership is highlighted in another article that illustrates the importance of how the partnership is essential when it comes to different sectors conducting collaborative exercises. Lastly, an overview of a legal conference the CIP Program participated in is provided.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *The CIP Report* and thank you for your continued support of the CIP Program.



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Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program Exercises Overview

An important effort of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is to conduct exercises with federal, state, and local agencies and private sector organizations. These exercises serve to improve preparedness and response should an emergency incident occur. The exercises help in establishing roles and responsibilities as well as identifying problems with response plans. DHS established the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) to organize and provide guidelines for such exercises.

By utilizing HSEEP and its specified guidelines, consistency and a national standard for all exercises is ensured. There are four performance requirements to be considered in order to be HSEEP compliant. They are as follows:

1. Conducting an annual Training and Exercise Plan Workshop and developing and maintaining a Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan.
2. Planning and conducting exercises in accordance with the guidelines set forth in HSEEP Volumes I-III.
3. Developing and submitting a properly formatted After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP). The format for the AAR/IP is found in HSEEP Volume III.
4. Tracking and implementing corrective actions identified in the AAR/IP.

HSEEP Mission

The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) is a capabilities and performance-based exercise program that provides a standardized methodology and terminology for exercise design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning.

The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) constitutes a national standard for all exercises. Through exercises, the National Exercise Program, supports organizations to achieve objective assessments of their capabilities so that strengths, and areas for improvement are identified, corrected and shared as appropriate prior to a real incident.

A checklist is provided on the HSEEP website to help guide an exercise program in being compliant.

There are several different types of exercises that can be conducted. The HSEEP has separated these exercises into two different categories, Discussion-based Exercises and Operations-based Exercises. The website defines Discussion-based Exercises as exercises leading to the development of new plans, policies, agreements, and procedures or helping participants become familiar with those that have already been established. Operations-based Exercises focus more on clarifying roles and responsibilities, identifying resource gaps, and validating plans, policies, agreements, and procedures.

Exercise Types

Discussions-based Exercises:

- Seminar - an informal discussion, designed to orient participants to new or updated plans, policies, or procedures.
- Workshop - resembles a seminar, but is employed to build specific products, such as a draft plan or policy.
- Tabletop Exercise - involves key personnel discussing simulated scenarios in an informal setting. They can be used to assess plans, policies, and procedures.
- Games - a simulation of operations that often involves two or more teams, usually in a competitive environment, using rules, data,

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Top Officials Exercises Test National Preparedness and Response

In the late 1990s, Congress mandated the development of enhanced multi-agency, multi-jurisdiction counterterrorism exercises to facilitate improved training and better enable officials to prepare for, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks involving weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). This mandate was realized through the Top Officials (TOPOFF) exercise series, first led by the U.S. Departments of Justice (Office for Domestic Preparedness) and State (Office of Counterterrorism) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency and now by DHS in coordination with other federal agencies.

The exercises consist of simulated, “real-time” incidents stemming from the use of WMDs, including chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons. Numerous scenarios are presented during the exercises that provide specific information to participants, such as the type and level of threat, extent of damage, and related factors. Each scenario challenges participants to make timely decisions in the face of arising issues concerning incident impact, policy, and strategy.

Four TOPOFF exercises have been held since 2000, covering a range of WMD threats in locations across the United States and its territories. Participation in the exercises centers on senior federal, state, territorial, and local government officials, law enforcement, first responders, and representatives of the private sector and other non-governmental entities (e.g., American Red Cross);

international stakeholders also play an important role in the exercises. During the TOPOFF exercises, participants address issues such as: homeland security; infrastructure protection; incident command; law enforcement and public safety; information gathering, intelligence analysis, and information sharing, both for the general public and among those with a valid need-to-know; public health; crisis and consequence management; and resource management.

Notably, exercise organizers seek to deliberately place stress on response systems to more effectively gauge capabilities and levels of success, or failure, in meeting exercise goals and objectives. While the specific goals of the TOPOFF exercises have evolved slightly through the years, the overarching goal of unifying response efforts has been maintained. The table on page 4 details the key goals of each TOPOFF exercise.

In an effort to learn from the exercises, and allow for better preparedness and improved future response, after-action conferences are held and after-action reports are developed following each TOPOFF full-scale exercise. In addition, each exercise attempts to build on the previous one and address changes to the organization of responsible entities or response frameworks. For example, a designated Principal Federal Official first participated in TOPOFF 2, and subsequent exercises considered revisions to the National Response Plan. Best

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TOPOFF Full-Scale Exercises

TOPOFF 1

Dates: May 20-24, 2000¹

Locations: metropolitan Denver, CO and Portsmouth, NH²

Attack Details: terrorist-motivated release of biological agent (Denver) release of chemical agent through vehicle bombing (Portsmouth)

TOPOFF 2

Dates: May 12-16, 2003

Locations: metropolitan areas of Chicago, IL and Seattle, WA³

Attack Details: covert release of a biological agent (Chicago) explosion containing radioactive material (Seattle)

TOPOFF 3

Dates: April 4-8, 2005

Locations: New London, CT and Union and Middlesex Counties, NJ⁴

Attack Details: chemical attack in conjunction with a vehicle bombing (New London) biological attack involving vehicle-based dispersal device (Union and Middlesex Counties)

TOPOFF 4

Dates: October 15-19, 2007

Locations: Guam, Phoenix, AZ, and Portland, OR

Attack Details: detonation of a radiological dispersal device (i.e., dirty bomb)

Note: In addition to the full-scale exercises, seminars, planning events, related exercises, and after-action conferences were conducted over a span of time reaching as much as two years.

¹ The “attack” agent in Denver, CO had a three-day incubation period, but active response began on May 20

² Complemented by an exercise in the National Capital Region (NCR), known as NCR 2000

³ The NCR also participated on Day 1

⁴ Related exercises were also held in the United Kingdom (Atlantic Blue) and Canada (Triple Play)

TOPOFF Exercise Goals

TOPOFF 1	TOPOFF 2	TOPOFF 3	TOPOFF 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess and strengthen the role of all organizations, including non-traditional partners, in crisis and consequence management; • Create broader operating frameworks of expert federal, state, and local crisis and consequence management systems; • Validate authorities, strategies, plans, policies, procedures, protocols, and synchronized capabilities; and • Build a sustainable, systematic, national exercise program in support of national domestic preparedness strategy and international response strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the Nation's capacity to manage extreme events; • Create broader frameworks for the operation of expert crisis and consequence management systems; • Validate authorities, strategies, plans, policies, procedures, and protocols; and • Build a sustainable, systematic national exercise program to support the national strategy for homeland security. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incident management: To test the full range of existing procedures for domestic incident management of a terrorist event and improve, through practice, top officials' capabilities in affected countries to respond in partnership; • Intelligence/ investigation: To test the handling and flow of operational and time-critical intelligence; • Public information: To practice strategic coordination of media relations and public information issues in response to linked terrorist incidents; and • Evaluation: To identify lessons learned and promote best practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention: To test the handling and flow of operational and time-critical intelligence between agencies to prevent a terrorist incident; • Intelligence/ investigation: To test the handling and flow of operational and time-critical intelligence between agencies prior to, and in response to, a linked terrorist incident; • Incident management: To test the full range of existing procedures for domestic incident management of a terrorist weapon of mass destruction (WMD) event and to improve top officials' capabilities to respond in partnership in accordance with the National Response Plan and National Incident Management System; • Public information: To practice the strategic coordination of media relations and public information issues in the context of a terrorist WMD incident or incident of national significance; and • Evaluation: To identify lessons learned and promote best practices.

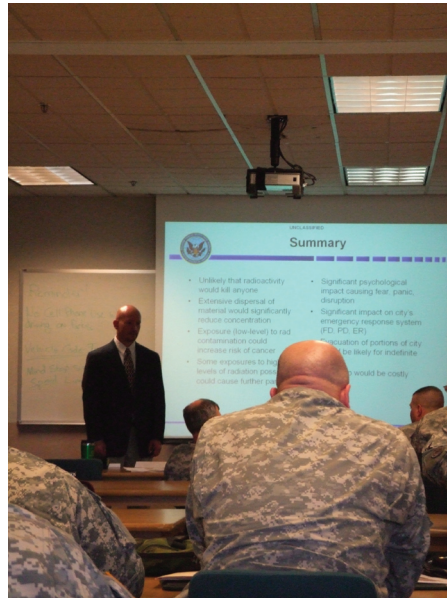
Exercises: How to Prepare a Nation

By Amber Burke, Cubic Applications, Inc.

In our nation's recent past the local, state, and federal response to Hurricane Katrina is the most visible reason why our nation's response entities at all levels, the public and private sector, the media, volunteers, military, international organizations, and numerous others are continuously encouraged to exercise their plans, policies, and procedures together to identify gaps in our domestic emergency response system. Just as athletes train to perform their best in athletic competition, first responders and government officials need to practice to be better prepared to deal with crises and save lives.

Established in 2003, the Department of Homeland Security was given four mission areas – prevent, protect, respond, and recover – to increase our nation's overall preparedness. To better prepare the nation for natural disasters, man-made accidents, and terrorist attacks, the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) was developed as a capabilities and performance-based program to perpetuate the preparedness cycle. By focusing on capabilities outlined in the Target Capabilities List (TCL) and its complement, the Universal Task List (UTL), our nation's civilian response system can become standardized and interchangeable no matter where a disaster takes place. Similarly, the military utilizes the Joint Mission-Essential Tasks (JMETs) or Universal Joint Task List (UJTL) to standardize the

capabilities across their specialized units.



Depending on the objectives, the scope of the exercise could be a discussion-based seminar or tabletop with key policy-makers, or an operations-based exercise that simulates first responders on the ground reacting to a variety of scenario elements. Over the years, Cubic Applications, Inc. has supported the government in executing exercises from tabletop to full-scale. To best discuss policy issues and prepare senior officials, a facilitator presents a scenario and asks questions to drive policymakers to make critical decisions and understand the ramifications – both positive and negative – and the limitations they have – both legally and logistically – during a table-top exercise. In a functional exercise, we work with the government to expand the scope of the scenario and the level of participation.

Generally, the functional exercise primarily tests the notification and communication aspects of incident response procedures and evaluates the ability of multiple operations centers to communicate effectively in a timely manner. The largest exercise, a full-scale, includes volunteer organizations, private sector companies, non-governmental organizations, international organizations, and other entities that respond outside of the government sector.

At the beginning of the exercise development cycle, exercise planners utilize the appropriate capabilities list to determine exercise objectives the training audience would like to improve or develop. Working with the client, Cubic Applications, Inc. researches and reviews previous After Action Reports, Lessons Learned, and other historical documentation to support the development of obtainable objectives. For instance, after a local jurisdiction updates its plan on mobilizing and tracking resources, it may request a functional exercise to test the communications between the local operations center and the identified distribution points to validate the plan. Testing the ability of first responders to execute proper decontamination procedures would require a full-scale exercise as first responders would physically set-up a decontamination area. A common objective in most exercises focuses on public affairs and the ability of the government to inform

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