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Emergency Preparedness Exercise Design and Evaluation: Session Two

Aimee Wollman Nesseth, M.Div, MS, Optima EP

Brian Kaczmarski, BS, MPH, Optima EP

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Exercise Design Series Part 2: Design and Development

Aimee Wollman Nesseth

Brian Kaczmarski

Co-Owners Optima EP LLC and Emergency Preparedness Consultants

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Objectives for Session #2

- Review the connection between Emergency Preparedness Capabilities and Exercise Objectives
- Define the key components of Exercise Design and Development
- Demonstrate writing a SMART Objective
- Identify helpful tools and resources that support the Design and Development of emergency preparedness exercises.

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Let's Review….

Exercises can be daunting, but they are here to stay

There is a building blocks approach to Capabilities, and to Exercises

The hierarchy and nomenclature that we learned are Capabilities, Activities and Tactics

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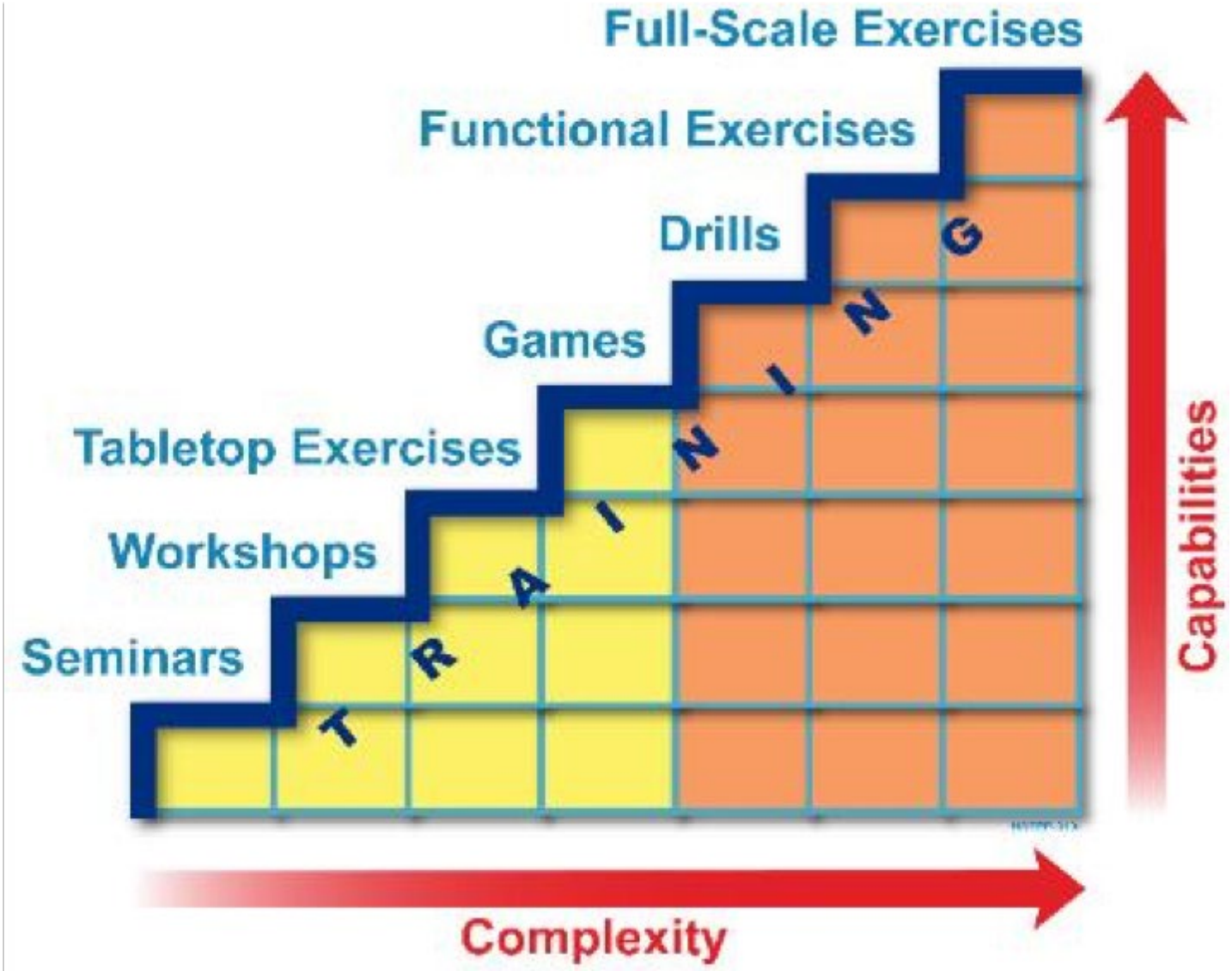
The Building Block Approach

Only Tabletop, Functional, and Full-Scale Exercises typically require an After-Action report



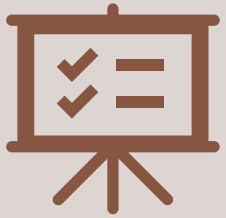
Nomenclature

Capability

- A large, complex function requiring ‘staff and stuff’ to be completed in a coordinated manner.
- Typically, a series of activities is required to demonstrate this.

Activities

- Smaller, more measurable and observable functions that collectively make up a capability.



Tactics

- Single, measurable actions that collectively form an activity.

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The Capability & Objective Connection

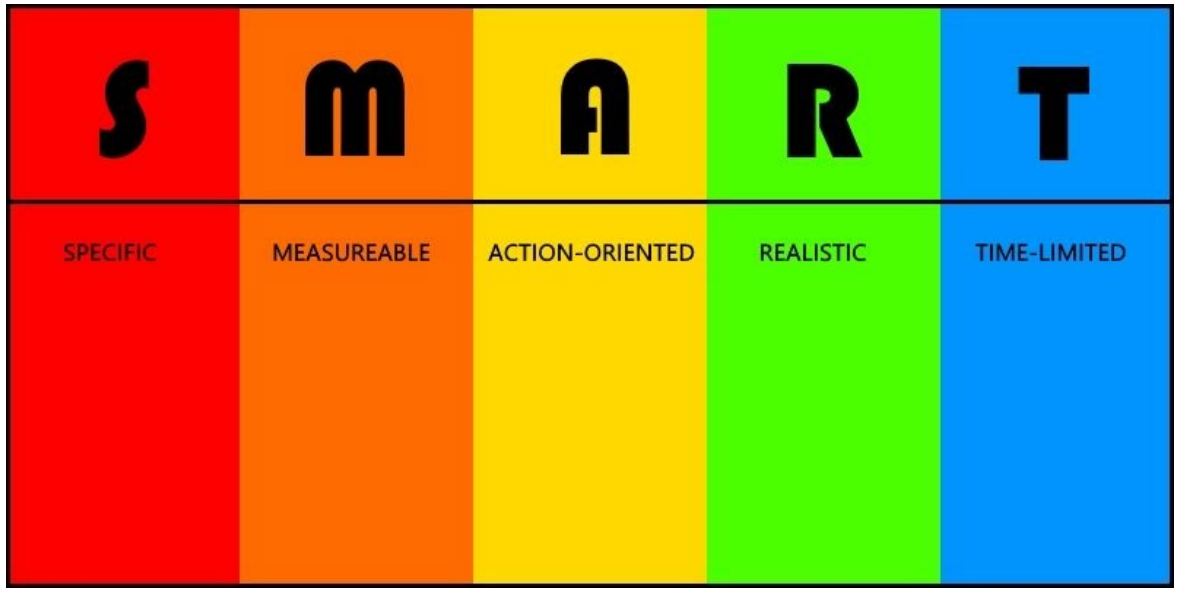
What do you hope to accomplish by performing a particular capability?

This is where **objectives** come in.

Ask yourself:

'If we activate X capability and conduct Y strategies and Z tactics, what will we have accomplished?' What will success look like?

THAT'S YOUR OBJECTIVE.



Images by Bing

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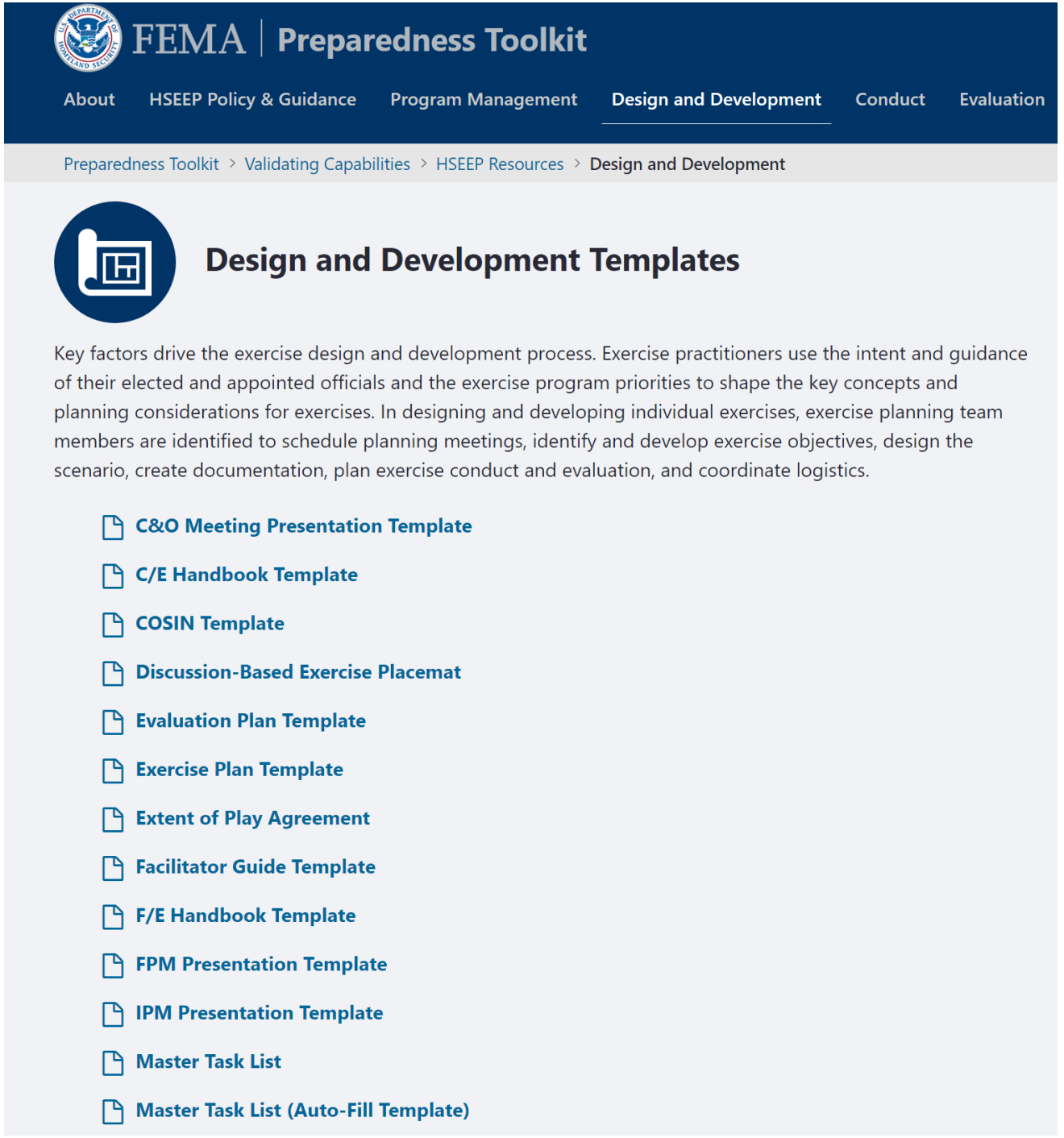
[About - HSEEP Resources - Preparedness Toolkit (fema.gov)]

20 pre-canned templates for you to use

There are about **3-4** that are actually practical



Two Key Components

1. **Design**
   - Develop Exercise Design Team
   - Identify capability or capabilities to be tested
   - Develop Objectives

2. **Development**
   - Build your Scenario to ‘guide’ play towards your capabilities and objectives
   - Determine number of ‘injects’ or ‘Sit Reps’ you will provide
   - Create documentation
   - Begin planning for exercise logistics, conduct, and evaluation

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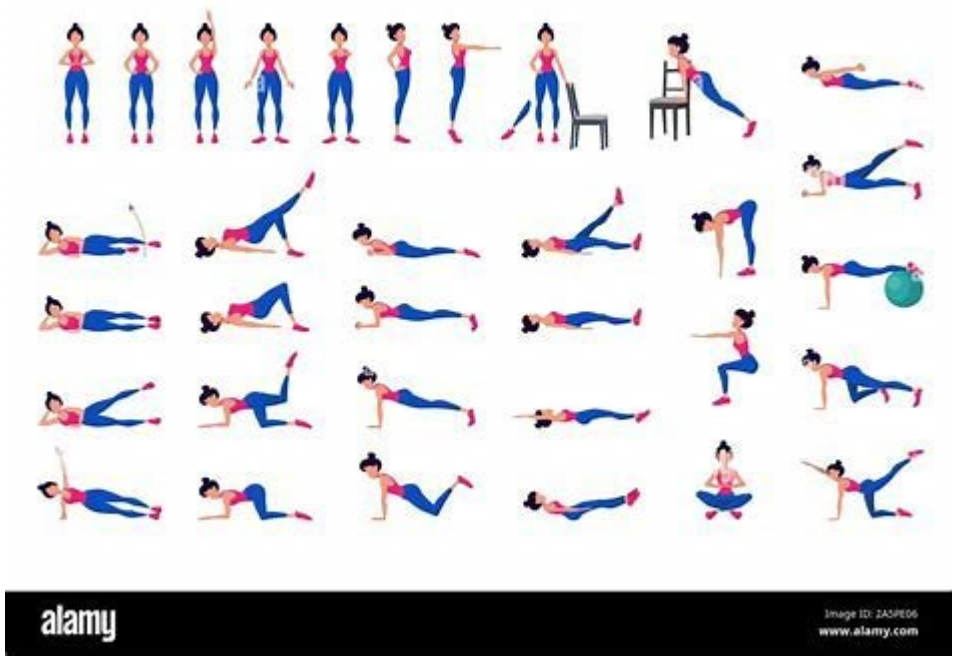
EXERCISE DESIGN



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Developing Your Team

The size of your Ex Design Team depends on the scope of the exercise; the fewer capabilities and objectives, the fewer design team members needed

Who SHOULD be a part of the Ex Design Team?

- An Administrator
- A member of each ‘department’ or ‘unit’ that will be involved
- Don’t forget to include Subject-Matter Experts (SME’s) For example: If your scenario is an IT failure, involve the IT Department

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Design Team Basics

- Typically, Design Team members don't 'Play', as they have an unfair advantage. If they simply must play due to capacity, try to put them in a 'non-lead' role
- Exercise Design Team members make GREAT evaluators again, as they have knowledge of what to be looking and/or listening for

- If the capacity just isn't there, contract out your exercise, there are many good options.

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Identify Capabilities to be Tested

- These may be dictated by your grant/workplan
- These may be areas of plans that are newly developed
- These may be areas of plans that are in need of updating
- These may be areas of plans that failed during a prior exercise or real event
- They should be 'functions' that would be activated during one of your top HVA threats. In other words, *'Test what is most likely to be needed'*

- If your plan is capability or 'function' based, it's as simple as choosing which 'chapters' to evaluate.

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Ok but, what if….ummm, our plan's not so good yet?

- It is tough to evaluate a poorly developed plan. How do you measure success when the plan doesn't articulate what to do?
- Consider 'adopting' response capabilities that already exist, even if they were written for different disciplines or provider types.
  - Example: 'Evacuation' is a capability that was originally designed in the Emergency Management world. However, evacuation is evacuation, no matter where it takes place or who does it. Take what exists, tweak it to meet your needs, localize to your environment.

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We exercise to learn and improve

- If you run into a situation where you are evaluating a poorly written plan, still run the exercise!!
- It's ok to show failure

- The #1 recommended corrective action to come out of said exercise should be 'update/enhance plan to 'insert criteria here.'

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Where were those capabilities again?

https://www.cdc.gov/orr/readiness/phep/index.htm

New HPP Capabilities Emphasize Healthcare Response (hhs.gov)

The Joint Commission Critical Areas

- ☐ Communication
- ☐ Resources and Assets
- ☐ Safety and Security
- ☐ Staff Responsibilities
- ☐ Utilities Management
- ☐ Patient Clinical and Support Activities

Mission Areas and Core Capabilities | FEMA.gov

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Writing a SMART Objective Example

Capability: Operational Communication: Ensure the capacity for timely communications in support of security, situational awareness, and operations.

Objective:

Specific: Should answer the 5 W's: Who, What, Where, When and Why

Measurable: Should be a numeric or descriptive value to determine quantity or quality

Action-Oriented: Should be within the control of exercise participants with current resources

Realistic: Should be relevant to the organization's mission and purpose

Time-Limited: Should be time-bound in some way

"Demonstrate the ability of the organization's night staff to receive and disseminate an event alert requesting assistance utilizing the organization's notification system regarding a HAZMAT spill within 15 minutes of initial notification, in accordance with the Communications Annex in the Emergency Operations Plan."

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Let’s do another one together….

Logistics and Supply Chain Management ← **Capability**

Mission Area: Response

Deliver essential commodities, equipment, and services in support of impacted communities and survivors, to include emergency power and fuel support, as well as the coordination of access to community staples. Synchronize logistics capabilities and enable the restoration of impacted supply chains.

Goal/Objective

- But where are the activities and tactics?????
- HOPEFULLY, already identified in your plan….
- If not, ‘introducing the Core Capability Development Sheets

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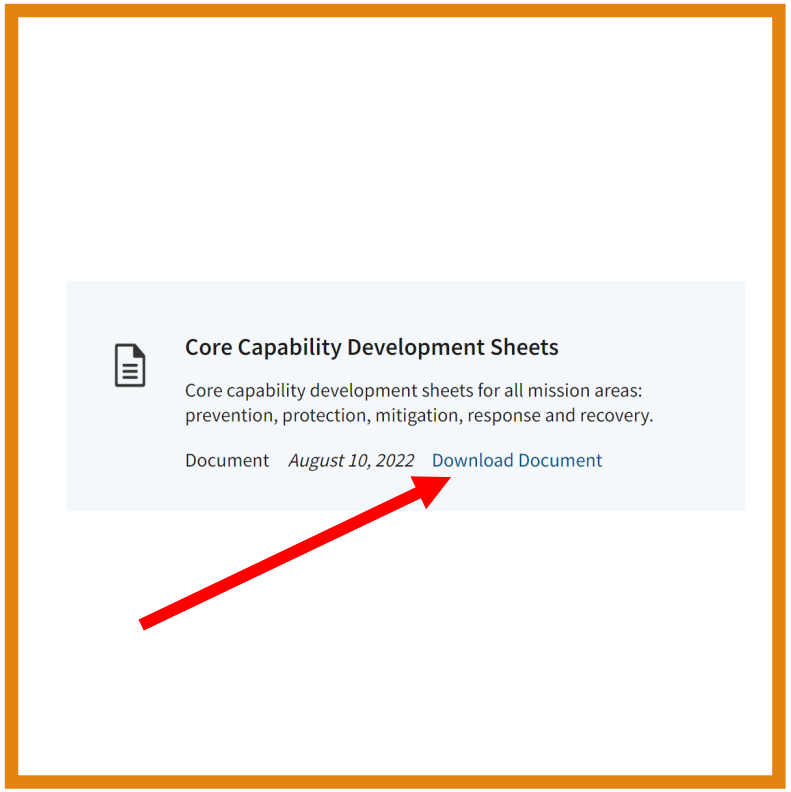
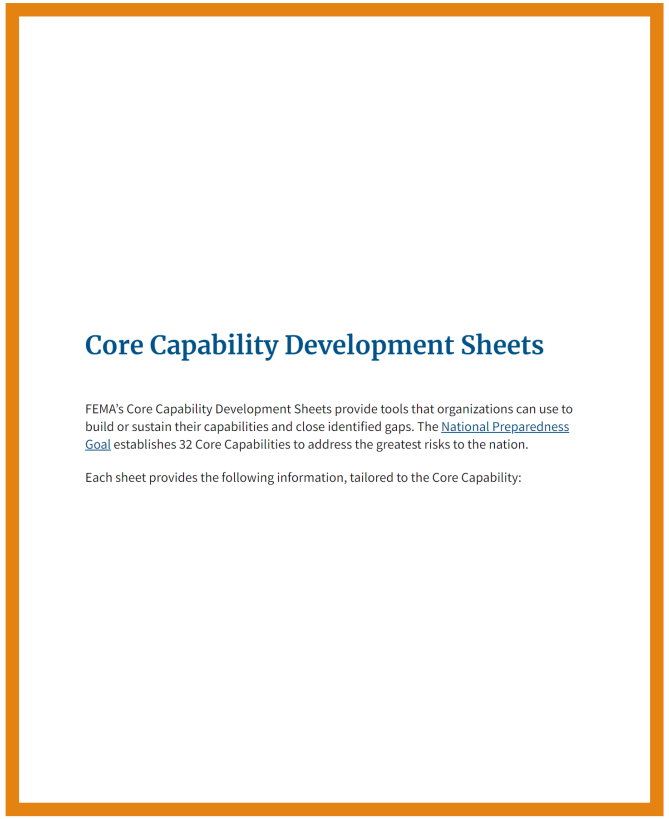
Core Capability Development Sheets ‘Cliff notes for Capability Development’

[CORE CAPABILITY DEVELOPMENT SHEETS | FEMA.GOV]





Core Capability Development Sheet for ‘Logistics and Supply Chain Management’

BUILD AND SUSTAIN THE CORE CAPABILITY

LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

MISSION AREA — PREVENTION — PROTECTION — MITIGATION — **RESPONSE** — RECOVERY

Description

Deliver essential commodities, equipment, and services in support of impacted communities and survivors, to include emergency power and fuel support, as well as the coordination of access to community staples. Synchronize logistics capabilities and enable the restoration of impacted supply chains.

1. Mobilize and deliver governmental, nongovernmental, and private sector resources to save lives, sustain lives, meet basic human needs, stabilize the incident, and transition to recovery, to include moving and delivering resources and services to meet the needs of disaster survivors.
2. Enhance public and private resource and services support for an affected area.

Training

Build or sustain this Core Capability with the example trainings below. Additional trainings for this Core Capability can be found at www.firstrespondertraining.gov/frt/npccatalog.

COURSE	DELIVERY	DURATION
E0967: NIMS ICS All-Hazards Logistics Section Chief Course	Mobile/Non-Resident, Residential	30 Hours
IS0026: Guide to Points of Distribution	Online/Distance Learning	4 Hours
IS0027: Orientation to FEMA Logistics	Online/Distance Learning	4 Hours
MGT-447: Managing Food Emergencies: Strategies for a Community Response	Mobile/Non-Resident	16 Hours
L8540: Basic Interagency Logistics Seminar/Logistic Center Tour	Mobile/Non-Resident	30 Hours

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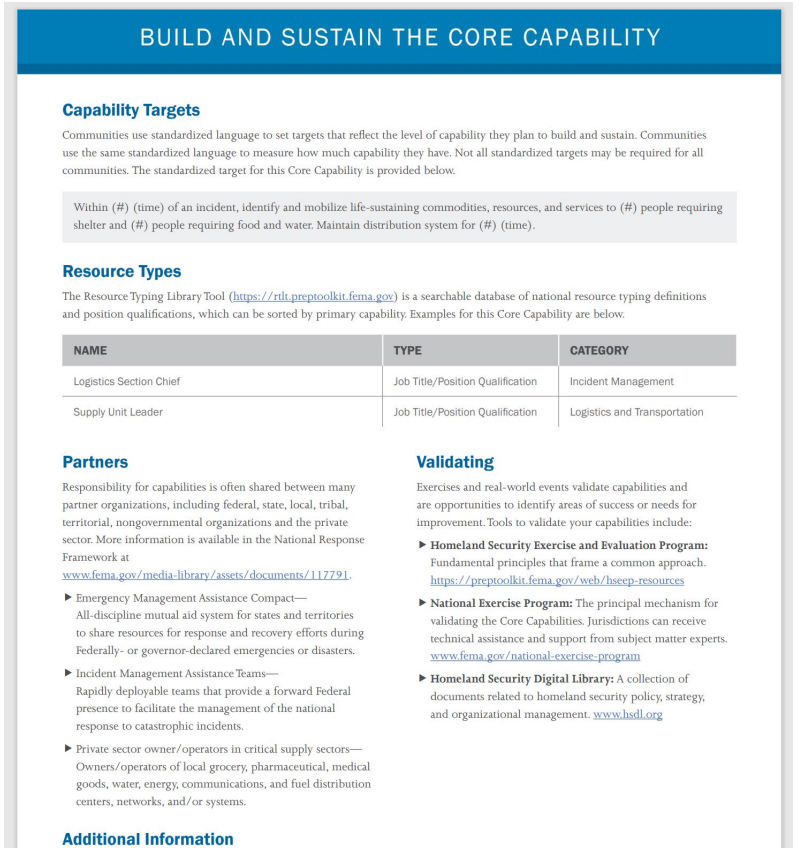
2nd part of Tool….



BUILD AND SUSTAIN THE CORE CAPABILITY

Capability Targets

Communities use standardized language to set targets that reflect the level of capability they plan to build and sustain. Communities use the same standardized language to measure how much capability they have. Not all standardized targets may be required for all communities. The standardized target for this Core Capability is provided below.

Within (#) (time) of an incident, identify and mobilize life-sustaining commodities, resources, and services to (#) people requiring shelter and (#) people requiring food and water. Maintain distribution system for (#) (time).

Resource Types

The Resource Typing Library Tool (https://rtlt.preptoolkit.fema.gov) is a searchable database of national resource typing definitions and position qualifications, which can be sorted by primary capability. Examples for this Core Capability are below.

NAME	TYPE	CATEGORY
Logistics Section Chief	Job Title/Position Qualification	Incident Management
Supply Unit Leader	Job Title/Position Qualification	Logistics and Transportation

Partners

Responsibility for capabilities is often shared between many partner organizations, including federal, state, local, tribal, territorial, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector. More information is available in the National Response Framework at www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/117791.

- Emergency Management Assistance Compact—All-discipline mutual aid system for states and territories to share resources for response and recovery efforts during Federally- or governor-declared emergencies or disasters.
- Incident Management Assistance Teams—Rapidly deployable teams that provide a forward Federal presence to facilitate the management of the national response to catastrophic incidents.
- Private sector owner/operators in critical supply sectors—Owners/operators of local grocery, pharmaceutical, medical goods, water, energy, communications, and fuel distribution centers, networks, and/or systems.

Validating

Exercises and real-world events validate capabilities and are opportunities to identify areas of success or needs for improvement. Tools to validate your capabilities include:

- **Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program:** Fundamental principles that frame a common approach. https://preptoolkit.fema.gov/web/hseep-resources
- **National Exercise Program:** The principal mechanism for validating the Core Capabilities. Jurisdictions can receive technical assistance and support from subject matter experts. www.fema.gov/national-exercise-program
- **Homeland Security Digital Library:** A collection of documents related to homeland security policy, strategy, and organizational management. www.hsdl.org

Additional Information

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Design Summary

- Develop Exercise Design Team
- Identify capability or capabilities to be tested
- Develop Objectives

- Sample Objective for Logistics and Supply Management
  - Activate Logistics and Supply Management and Determine Immediate Resources Needs within the 1st Operational Period
    - Is it SMART?

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EXERCISE DEVELOPMENT

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Build your Scenario to ‘guide’ play

- Let’s pretend we want to test Operational Coordination, Information Sharing, and Logistics and Supply Chain Management
- What ‘story’ or scenario can we create that ‘guides play’ towards a recognition that those capabilities would be needed to successfully respond?
- General Rules:
  - Make it realistic and simple (no curve-balls)
  - Look at your plan to see if ‘activation triggers’ are identified. Make your story ‘go to’ those triggers.
  - Stress to players to ‘not fight the scenario’ – it’s designed to get you to where you need to be for a successful exercise
  - It’s ok to ‘STOP’ play wherever you want – i.e.- we only want to test the first two activities of Information Sharing
  - Time jumps are ok and sometimes necessary – be very clear when you are using them

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Determine number of updates and amount of ‘play-time’

- Information or scenario updates are typically called ‘injects’ or ‘sit-reps’
- Injects typically only introduce one or two pieces of information
- Sit-reps typically include a narrative update, of which numerous activities and tactics could potentially be taken
- There is no right or wrong
- If using injects, it is typically a VERY LARGE exercise (the listing of injects is called a Master Sequence of Events List, or MSEL). The number of injects in a very large exercise can be in the hundreds….
- If using Sit-reps, typically 3-5 sit-reps are produced, allowing for 3-5 opportunities for play
  - Sit-reps typically are either a PowerPoint presentation or a word document designed to represent an ICS 201, or Quick Start Form

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Tricks of the Trade

- Always have more injects or scenario updates than you think you will need

- Be prepared to introduce assumptions or artificialities
  - These may be needed if players get ‘stuck’. They may need a key piece of information in order to feel comfortable moving forward

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Create Documentation

At MINIMUM begin thinking about:

- Quick Start IAP or appropriate ICS forms for PLAYERS
- PowerPoint or SitReps to ensure play flows smoothly
- Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEG's) for Evaluators
- After the Exercise:
  - Participant Feedback Form
  - After Action Report
  - Improvement Plan

We will cover this in more depth during Sessions #3 and #4.

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Development Summary

- Build your scenario after you've identified your capabilities and objectives
- Determine the number of "injects" or "Sit Reps"-How long do you have for the exercise?
- Begin creating documentation
- Begin thinking about Exercise Logistics, Facilitators, and Evaluators

As always…much more to come!

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Part 3: Exercise Conduct

Please reach out to Aimee or Brian with any questions.

aimee@optimaep.com
brian@optimaep.com

HSEEP Training Videos – YouTube (34 short videos)

HSEEP Training Videos

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34 videos 42,087 views Updated yesterday

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- Virtual facilitated tabletop exercises September 2023 through September 2024.
- Meet CMS requirements for full-scale community-based exercise.
- Test functional elements of your Emergency Plan.
- Complete the required documentation and receive an “After Action Report” from Optima EP.
- To register: Meet the CMS Requirement: Virtually facilitated tabletop exercise (mailchi.mp)

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