Case Study – Walgett LEMC – Power Outage Exercise

Exercise need

The Walgett Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) desktop exercise was held on 19 November 2025 at Walgett Shire Council and led by NSW Police Force. Delivered under the FY2025-2026 Emergency Management Exercise Program, the exercise used a significant earthquake scenario to examine the effectiveness of local emergency management arrangements, interagency coordination and decision making across response and early recovery.

Exercise aim

The aim of the exercise was to strengthen local emergency management capability, enhance interoperability and improve preparedness across the LEMC and supporting agencies. The exercise tested interagency coordination, emergency management arrangements, strategic and operational decision making across the response and early recovery stages.

Exercise objectives

The primary objectives of the exercise were to:

- **Validate** local emergency management arrangements and relevant sub-plans
- **Test** interagency communication, coordination and information sharing
- **Assess** roles and responsibilities of participating agencies
- **Identify** strengths, gaps, and areas for continuous improvement.
- **Build** confidence and capability of personal involved in emergency management and recovery activities.

All the objectives were substantially achieved during the exercise.

Exercise outcomes

The exercise outcomes aligned with the grant program's objective of strengthening local emergency management capability, interoperability and preparedness. The exercise also reinforced the importance of the following:

- Conduct regular multi-agency exercises to maintain preparedness capabilities.
- Clear communication pathways and a shared understanding of the operating picture.
- Ongoing training to address staff turnover and evolving responsibilities.
- The integration of recovery considerations into response planning from the outset.

The exercise was attended by representatives from a broad range of local, state and supporting agencies, who contributed a high level of engagement throughout the activity. The exercise was a valuable and constructive

Overall, the exercise was a constructive and worthwhile activity that achieved its objectives and delivered tangible benefits for participating agencies. It will assist in guiding future training, exercising and planning activities to ensure continuous improvement in emergency management capability across the region.

Exercise evaluation

The exercise reinforced the importance of regular multi-agency exercises, clear communication pathways, shared situational awareness, ongoing training to address staff turnover, and integrating recovery planning early in response efforts. High engagement and professionalism were noted among participants.

Insight/Lesson	Sustain/ Improve
Strong interagency collaboration and willingness to share information	Sustain

Insight/Lesson	Sustain/ Improve
Clear understanding of lead and support agency roles	Sustain
Effective use of local knowledge to inform decision making	Sustain
High level of engagement and professionalism from participants	Sustain
Clarification of escalation and notification processes in the early stages of an incident	Improve
Further training required for some personnel in emergency management frameworks and terminology	Improve
Opportunities to strengthen recovery planning considerations earlier in the response phase.	Improve

Recommendations

The exercise reinforced the need for regular multi-agency exercises, clear communication and shared situational awareness, ongoing training, and early integration of recovery into response planning, with these lessons informing future exercises, training, and plan reviews.

These lessons will inform future exercises, training and planning. Focus should remain on the following:

1. Clarify escalation and notification processes
2. Provide further training and integrate recovery planning
3. Enhance multi-agency exercises, communication and lessons learned application.
4. Strengthen communication pathways and shared situational awareness.