# Heatwave Functional Exercise – Exercise Plan

[Insert Exercise Name]

Contents

[Heatwave Functional Exercise – Exercise Plan 1](#_Toc186589327)

[Exercise [Name] – Exercise Plan 4](#_Toc186589328)

[Background 4](#_Toc186589329)

[Need 4](#_Toc186589330)

[Overview 5](#_Toc186589331)

[Participants 5](#_Toc186589332)

[Aim 6](#_Toc186589333)

[Exercise Objectives & Standards / Measures 6](#_Toc186589334)

[Exercise Scope 9](#_Toc186589335)

[Exercise outline 9](#_Toc186589336)

[Exercise Name 9](#_Toc186589337)

[Exercise Type 9](#_Toc186589338)

[Scenario 10](#_Toc186589339)

[Governance and Management Structure 11](#_Toc186589340)

[Exercise Control 11](#_Toc186589341)

[EXCON Roles 11](#_Toc186589342)

[Activation Cell 12](#_Toc186589343)

[Exercise Briefings 14](#_Toc186589344)

[SMEAC Format 14](#_Toc186589345)

[Exercise Termination 14](#_Toc186589346)

[Criteria for Exercise Termination 15](#_Toc186589347)

[Post-Termination Activities 15](#_Toc186589348)

[Public information 15](#_Toc186589349)

[Evaluation Plan 15](#_Toc186589350)

[Purpose of evaluation 15](#_Toc186589351)

[Process of Evaluation 16](#_Toc186589352)

[Data Collection & Observation 16](#_Toc186589353)

[Data Analysis 16](#_Toc186589354)

[Exercise Report 16](#_Toc186589355)

[Exercise Debriefs 16](#_Toc186589356)

[Exercise Reporting 17](#_Toc186589357)

[Budget 17](#_Toc186589358)

[Co-contributions 17](#_Toc186589359)

[Unspent Funds 18](#_Toc186589360)

[Anticipated Expenses 18](#_Toc186589361)

[Timeline 18](#_Toc186589362)

[Points of contact 19](#_Toc186589363)

[Approval 19](#_Toc186589364)

[Attachments 20](#_Toc186589365)

[Exercise Outputs 20](#_Toc186589366)

[Exercise Program 20](#_Toc186589367)

[EXCON Staff Responsibilities 21](#_Toc186589368)

[Exercise Briefings and Debriefings 24](#_Toc186589369)

[Roles & Responsibilities Checklist 27](#_Toc186589370)

## Exercise [Name] – Exercise Plan

### Background

The 2024-25 Emergency Management Exercise Program, established by the Premier’s Department, aims to support local and regional preparedness through multi-agency exercises aligned with State Emergency Management Committee (SEMC) priorities. This program enhances emergency response capability across New South Wales by promoting continuous improvement in emergency management through practical exercises, strategic inter-agency coordination, and information sharing.

The SEMC focuses on advancing state-wide emergency management policy, enabling improved cooperation across agencies, and driving the evaluation of training and exercises. Region and Local Emergency Management Committees (REMCs and LEMCs) play a key role in supporting this mission by organising and evaluating emergency exercises that foster coordination and readiness at regional and local levels.

In the 2024-25 Financial Year, the program specifically targets three SEMC-endorsed exercise priorities: tsunami, heatwave, and cyber emergencies. Each priority tests different response capabilities, with tsunami and heatwave exercises focusing on local and regional impacts, and a state-level cyber emergency exercise addressing the complexities of cyber incidents. The program also incorporates lessons from the recent Emergency Volunteering Review, emphasising preparedness for informal or spontaneous volunteers.

The Premier’s Department provides exercise materials and financial support for REMCs and LEMCs to run exercises aligned with these priorities. Through this program, participating committees will strengthen local and regional emergency management capabilities, focusing on practical readiness for real-world challenges.

### Need

Heatwaves are a significant and increasing threat across Australia, with the potential to severely impact public health, critical infrastructure, and community resilience. In response to the rising frequency and intensity of heatwave events, it is essential for LEMCs and REMCs to evaluate their ability to effectively manage such emergencies in real time.

This functional activation exercise addresses the following identified needs:

* **Gaps in Preparedness:** There is a need to test and improve local and regional emergency plans for heatwave scenarios, focusing on their effectiveness in managing complex, real-time emergencies. This exercise provides an opportunity to evaluate the practicality and adaptability of current response protocols and identify potential areas for enhancement.
* **Capability Assessment:** Ensuring the adaptability and readiness of LEMC/REMC members in managing complex and evolving scenarios is essential. This exercise provides an opportunity to practise and assess their ability to apply emergency procedures effectively and adapt to dynamic situations in a simulated environment.
* **Interagency Coordination:** Effective management of heatwave events relies on seamless communication and collaboration among multiple agencies. This exercise provides an opportunity to evaluate interagency protocols, ensuring that communication and information flow effectively support coordinated emergency management.
* **New Risks and Requirements:** Changes in climate patterns, increased urbanisation, and community vulnerabilities have elevated the risk profile for heatwaves. This, combined with updates to the Heatwave Sub Plan, underscores the need to validate procedures, resource allocation, and overall readiness in a controlled, simulated environment.
* **Heatwave Sub-plan Alignment:** With the recent revision and update of the NSW State Heatwave Sub-plan, this exercise provides LEMCs and REMCs an opportunity to test their emergency management arrangements against the new policy framework. It allows participants to validate their understanding and application of the updated sub-plan in a practical, real-time scenario, ensuring alignment with current state-level guidance.

By conducting this exercise, LEMCs and REMCs will gain valuable insights into their readiness and effectiveness in managing heatwave emergencies, identify areas for improvement, and strengthen their overall capability to protect lives, infrastructure, and communities during such events.

### Overview

This exercise is a functional activation exercise designed to test the real-time response capabilities of Local and Regional Emergency Management Committees (LEMCs and REMCs) to a simulated heatwave emergency. Unlike an incident management exercise, the focus here is on the activation and operation of local and regional Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs) and the coordination between combat agency liaisons, supporting agencies, and functional coordinators within these centres. Participants will work alongside a simulated Incident Management Team (IMT) to coordinate their responses to dynamic and challenging scenarios, supporting the combat agency and community through the pre-warning, warning, impact, and very early recovery phases of the emergency.

The exercise, spanning 4–6 hours, begins with LEMC/REMC members assuming roles in an EOC that has been operational for the past two days. Participants will apply local and regional emergency plans and EOC procedures while responding to a series of dynamic scenario injects.

The exercise is geographically generic and can be tailored to reflect the unique features, risks, and communities of a specific local or regional area. It aims to evaluate the readiness, adaptability, and effectiveness of emergency plans, resource management, and response coordination. This provides an opportunity to identify procedural gaps, enhance interagency collaboration, and strengthen overall emergency management capability.

The target audience includes government and non-government agencies that would typically form part of an LEMC, REMC, or EOC.

## Participants

Participants in this exercise will include members of the LEMC or REMC and representatives from participating organisations as defined in the area’s Local or Regional Emergency Management Plan. Participants include, but are not limited to:

* Local Emergency Operations Controller (LEOCON) / Regional Emergency Operations Controller (REOCON)
* Local Emergency Management Officer (LEMO) / Regional Emergency Management Officer (REMO)
* LEMC / REMC Combat and Supporting Agency Representatives, as relevant to the area, including:
* NSW Ambulance
* NSW Rural Fire Service
* Fire & Rescue NSW
* NSW State Emergency Service
* Marine Rescue NSW
* VRA Rescue
* Surf Life Saving Australia
* Functional Area Coordinators and Representatives
* Participating Organisations, as deemed appropriate by the LEMC / REMC
* Other Stakeholders as deemed appropriate by the LEMC / REMC

## Aim

To test the real-time response of the LEMC/REMC to a simulated heatwave emergency, in order to evaluate the committee's readiness, preparedness, and capability to manage the hazard effectively.

[Insert additional or alternate aim as required]

## Exercise Objectives & Standards / Measures

1. Ensure that the LEMC/REMC has procedures in place for managing heatwaves.
2. Actions and decisions taken align with key response protocols in the local/regional emergency plan
3. Actions and strategies during the exercise align with protocols and procedures outlined in the State Emergency Sub Plan
4. Actions, strategies, and tactics demonstrate a clear understanding of the emergency plans

[Insert additional standard measures as required]

1. Evaluate the adaptability and flexibility of LEMC/REMC team members in responding to challenging or unexpected developments during the exercise.
2. Relevant emergency procedures provide clear guidance to support decision-making in dynamic and evolving emergency situations
3. Procedures enable actions and decisions that are practical, adaptive, and realistic in response to the unfolding emergency

[Insert additional standard measures as required]

1. Verify that the structure of any activated organisation (e.g., EOC) aligns with procedures and is logical, clearly structured, and communicated to all involved.
2. Team members collaborate to identify practical actions in response to scenario developments
3. Clear direction and intent are provided to enable rapid decision-making aligned with incident objectives
4. Strategies and tactics are adapted as needed in response to incident changes
5. Responses to changes are acknowledged quickly, with decisions made and implemented within a realistic timeframe for achievable outcomes
6. Effective communication and intelligence flow among team members occurs, to maintain situational awareness

[Insert additional standard measures as required]

1. Evaluate participants' knowledge and awareness of emergency management, hazard specific and EOC procedures.
2. NSW Ambulance is designated and recognised as the combat agency for heatwave response, with roles assigned accordingly
3. Participants initiate and follow response strategies aligned with the Heatwave Sub Plan, reflecting the plan's methodology and content in their decisions
4. Resource requests and allocations are made in accordance with the Heatwave Sub Plan, without the need for external prompts or corrections
5. Decisions, strategies, tactics and actions demonstrate adherence to hazard-specific and local / regional emergency procedures

[Insert additional standard measures as required]

1. Assess participants' knowledge, skills, and abilities in operating within an EOC.
2. Participants correctly implement EOC activation procedures, including setting up workstations, establishing communication lines, and initiating reporting protocols
3. Roles within the EOC are clearly assigned and understood by participants, with each individual performing tasks aligned with their designated role
4. Decisions are made using established EOC decision-making frameworks, demonstrating participants’ understanding of structured processes for prioritising and delegating tasks
5. Participants effectively use EOC communication systems, such as radios, digital messaging platforms, or reporting forms, to relay information both internally and externally
6. Situational awareness is maintained through regular updates and information-sharing, with participants contributing timely and relevant data to the common operating picture
7. Participants demonstrate the ability to analyse and interpret incoming information to adjust operational strategies and provide clear, actionable directives to team members
8. EOC functions, such as resource tracking, situation monitoring, and reporting, are managed efficiently, with participants following procedural steps without needing additional guidance

[Insert additional standard measures as required]

1. Evaluate the effectiveness of decisions and actions in response to challenging and complex scenarios.
2. Decisions made align with EOC and incident objectives and result in measurable progress toward stabilising the scenario
3. Actions taken demonstrate adaptability and address unexpected developments without compromising operational priorities
4. Resource allocations are appropriate to the scenario's needs, with minimal resource wastage or duplication of efforts
5. Communication of decisions and actions is done so in a way that maintains situational awareness across all relevant functions within the EOC and LEMC/REMC

[Insert additional standard measures as required]

1. Assess the suitability and adequacy of facilities, venues, and resources available during the exercise.
2. Facilities and venues support effective communication, collaboration, and operational flow, allowing participants to perform their roles without significant hindrance
3. Available resources, including equipment, technology, and supplies, are sufficient to meet the demands of the simulated emergency and exercise, with no critical shortages observed
4. Facilities and resources are adaptable to the exercise’s evolving needs, with adequate backup options in place for essential functions (e.g., power, connectivity, workspace)
5. The layout of the venue supports logical placement of teams, equipment, and EOC functions, minimising congestion and allowing clear access to necessary areas

[Insert additional standard measures as required]

1. Identify knowledge, skill, and capability gaps among LEMC/REMC members and develop action plans to address these gaps.
2. Gaps in knowledge, skills, or capabilities are observed and documented during the exercise, with specific instances noted where performance was hindered by these gaps
3. Instances where additional training, resources, or procedural clarification would improve performance are identified and recorded

[Insert additional standard measures as required]

1. Test interagency communication and coordination during the response.
2. Communication protocols among LEMC/REMC and EOC are established and followed consistently and in accordance with procedures
3. Inter team and agency communication is not hindered by barriers, challenges or protocols
4. Information is shared quickly and in a manner across team members, agencies, and functions with minimal need for repetition or clarification

[Insert additional standard measures as required]

## Exercise Scope

This exercise will involve the participation of LEMC or REMC members as defined in the relevant Local or Regional Emergency Management Plan. It will focus on the operation of Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs) at the local and regional levels, as well as the coordination of multi-agency efforts within these centres during a simulated heatwave emergency.

Participants will address dynamic scenarios, manage resource allocation, coordinate functional area responses, and support the combat agency in mitigating the impacts of the emergency on the community.

While interactions with IMT processes are included as part of the scenario, the exercise is not intended to evaluate or replicate combat agency-specific IMT training. Instead, the focus remains on EOC-level coordination, support functions, and interagency collaboration.

In Scope:

* LEMC or REMC coordination, operations, and functionality
* EOC activation and operations
* Community preparedness and public warning processes
* Coordinated agency and functional area response
* Implementation of immediate and short-term recovery measures

Out of Scope:

* Testing of higher-tier emergency management coordination functions
* Evaluation of individual agency-specific response procedures
* Specific combat agency IMT functions and operations
* Evaluation of individual combat agency IMT procedures

## Exercise outline

### Exercise Name

[To be determined by the relevant LEMC/REMC]

### Exercise Type

This exercise will be conducted as a functional activation-style exercise, designed to test and practise an LEMC/REMC coordination, communication, and support functions in the context of an EOC operation, alongside a simulated IMT, during a simulated emergency. Participants will respond in real time to scenario information, presented as it would be during an actual emergency, using established communication channels such as phone, email, or web-based incident management systems.

To support the exercise, a set of suggested general ideas, special ideas, and injects has been provided. These elements serve as a foundation for structuring the exercise and guiding the activities of EOCs. Individual LEMCs and REMCs are encouraged to tailor these concepts to reflect their specific community characteristics, risks, and resources. Organisers should establish a robust activation cell to simulate the roles of an IMT, agency staff, community members, and other stakeholders. This ensures participants are provided with realistic injects and prompts, enhancing the realism and engagement of the exercise.

The flow of the exercise will be managed by the Exercise Control (EXCON) team under the direction of the exercise controller. Scenario injects will be delivered in accordance with the Master Schedule of Events (MSE), simulating the dynamic nature of a heatwave emergency. The pace of the exercise can be adjusted as needed to maintain engagement and align with exercise objectives.

Functional activation exercises are particularly effective for testing the readiness and adaptability of LEMCs, REMCs, and EOCs. This exercise format enables participants to:

* Practice decision-making and procedural application in a controlled, simulated environment
* Assess the interaction of EOCs with external agencies and stakeholders
* Focus on coordination and control without requiring the deployment of external field resources

This format provides a cost-effective way to evaluate real-time emergency management performance, offering a high level of realism and an opportunity to enhance preparedness across all levels of coordination.

To ensure relevance, organisers are encouraged to tailor the provided general ideas, special ideas, and injects to reflect the unique risks, infrastructure, and community characteristics of their region. This may include incorporating local maps, specific geographic features, and community-specific vulnerabilities into the scenario. Organisers should also adapt the activation cell structure to include key local stakeholders, such as representatives from community groups, major industries, or high-risk facilities, to simulate realistic interactions and decision-making.

### Scenario

The scenario unfolds during an extreme heatwave event in early January, following months of drought and abnormally high temperatures across the region. Local services, including health and emergency response, are already under sustained pressure from heat-related incidents and increased community needs. With temperatures exceeding 45°C during the day and minimal overnight relief, the heatwave has triggered widespread challenges for residents, businesses, and critical infrastructure.

The scenario focuses on testing the coordination, resource management, and support functions of EOCs as they address the complex challenges of a widespread heatwave emergency. It emphasises interagency collaboration and effective communication between functional areas, combat agencies, and community stakeholders.

This exercise framework is designed to be geographically and contextually adaptable, allowing organisers to tailor the scenario to reflect the unique risks, infrastructure, and community characteristics of the participating LEMC or REMC. Tailoring could include integrating locally relevant hazards, demographics, or infrastructure challenges. By presenting a dynamic and realistic sequence of events, it aims to evaluate readiness, identify procedural gaps, and strengthen overall emergency management capabilities.

## Governance and Management Structure

An exercise planning group will be established that includes:

* emergency management committee representatives
* the combat agency with responsibility for the scenario hazard
* council representatives with a lead role in recovery arrangements
* other key stakeholders as appropriate.

The planning group will be chaired by [INSERT NAME] from [INSERT AGENCY NAME].

Agencies who will be participating in the exercise include:

* [INSERT NAMES OF PARTICIPATING AGENCIES]

The exercise is targeted at stakeholders who are typically members or representatives of a Local or Regional Emergency Management Committee, including local councils, state agencies, and non-government organisations.

**Proposed agencies/participants:**

* local council representatives, including Local Emergency Management Officers
* NSW Police, including the Local Emergency Operations Controller (LEOCON) or Regional Emergency Operations Controller (REOCON) and Regional Emergency Management Officers (REMO)
* State Government Combat and Support Agencies
* Functional Area Coordinators and/or Functional Area Representatives
* Participating Organisations

### Exercise Control

The Exercise Control (EXCON) team is responsible for the safe and effective conduct of the exercise. Comprised of personnel from participating organisations, volunteers, and other contributors, the EXCON team plays a critical role in ensuring the exercise achieves its objectives. From monitoring participant activities to introducing scenario injects and facilitating a realistic simulation environment, EXCON team members work to keep the exercise running smoothly and aligned with its intended outcomes.

The EXCON team operates under the direction of the Exercise Controller, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. These roles include managing logistics, tracking the scenario, ensuring safety, and evaluating participant performance. Members of the EXCON team are easily identifiable and aim to minimise interference with participants while guiding the exercise towards its goals. Their efforts ensure a cohesive, engaging, and productive exercise experience for all involved.

### EXCON Roles

To effectively manage and deliver this exercise, a variety of EXCON roles will be required. These roles ensure the exercise runs smoothly, safely, and achieves its objectives. The following key roles are likely to be filled:

**Key EXCON Roles:**

* Exercise Director
* Exercise Controller
* Exercise Planning Coordinator
* Activation Cell
* Evaluation Team
* Exercise Evaluation Coordinator
* Evaluators
* Logistics Coordinator
* Role Players

**Optional or Recommended Roles:**

* Role Play Coordinator
* Observer Coordinator
* Observers
* Safety Officer

These roles may be adjusted or expanded depending on the size and complexity of the exercise, ensuring all aspects of the scenario are effectively managed and delivered.

### Activation Cell

The Activation Cell plays a critical role in the effective execution of the exercise by simulating the dynamic functions of external stakeholders, such as combat agencies, the Incident Management Team (IMT), and public-facing operations. This team acts as the interface between the Exercise Control (EXCON) team and exercise participants, delivering realistic injects, managing responses to scenario developments, and ensuring the exercise flows according to plan.

**Responsibilities of the Activation Cell:**

* Representing the IMT, including communicating critical decisions, requests, and updates to the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC).
* Simulating public interactions, such as inquiries from community members, businesses, or event organisers.
* Acting as liaisons between the IMT and other stakeholders, ensuring that exercise injects reflect realistic interagency communication and coordination.
* Escalating complex or resource-heavy situations to exercise participants in line with scenario objectives.
* Monitoring the progress of the scenario and dynamically adjusting it as needed to maintain exercise flow. This includes providing intelligence, situation reports (SitReps), updates, and other information participants would logically receive in a real-world scenario, ensuring engagement between injects and special ideas.

**Suggested Roles for the Activation Cell:**

The Activation Cell will need to simulate a variety of roles to ensure realism and maintain exercise momentum:

* Incident Management Team (IMT): Representing operational decision-makers and relaying critical information to participants.
* Public Interaction: Responding to inquiries and escalating challenges from simulated members of the public, businesses, or organisations.
* Emergency Crews: Simulating first responders, support teams, and other field-level units involved in the scenario.
* Simulated Media: Representing local, regional, or national media outlets, including accurate or inaccurate reporting to drive scenario outcomes.
* Higher-Level Emergency Management Teams: Representing state or regional controllers, emergency management teams, or other oversight bodies issuing directives or guidance.
* Liaisons and Controllers: Acting as intermediaries between agencies, ensuring participants are challenged by realistic multi-agency coordination.
* External Emergency Operations Centres (EOCs): Simulating interactions with other activated EOCs to foster inter-EOC communication.
* Call Responders: Answering and escalating participant requests or inquiries as they arise, ensuring realistic information flow.

By covering these roles, the Activation Cell ensures a dynamic and immersive exercise environment that challenges participants to engage with the complexities of emergency management effectively.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Assignee** |
| Exercise Director | [INSERT NAME] |
| Exercise Controller | [INSERT NAME] |
| Exercise Planning Coordinator | [INSERT NAME] |
| Activation Cell | [INSERT NAME/S] |
| Exercise Evaluation Coordinator | [INSERT NAME] |
| Exercise Evaluators | [INSERT NAME/S] |
| Logistics Coordinator | [INSERT NAME] |
| Role Play Coordinator | [INSERT NAME] |
| Role-players | [INSERT NAME/S] |
| Observer Coordinator | [INSERT NAME] |
| Safety Officer | [INSERT NAME] |

### Exercise Briefings

Before beginning the exercise, the following groups should be briefed:

* Participants
* Evaluators

Additional briefings may also be necessary, depending on the exercise setup:

* Safety Briefing
* Observer Briefing
* Role Player Briefing

Briefings should be delivered by someone with in-depth knowledge of the exercise and its intended outcomes, such as the Exercise Controller or a designated representative.

Briefings can take place immediately before the exercise or during the preparation phase, provided there isn’t an extended gap that could cause attendees to forget critical information.

All briefings should follow the SMEACS format (see below) and, at a minimum, cover:

* Exercise aim and objectives
* Scenario overview (without revealing specific surprises or injects, unless essential for the group)
* Relevant roles and responsibilities for the group being briefed
* Copies of any relevant documents

### SMEAC Format

**Situation:** A summary of the current circumstances, including relevant background information and context.

**Mission:** A clear and concise statement of the task or objective to be achieved.

**Execution:** The plan detailing how the mission will be accomplished, outlining strategies, tactics, and specific tasks.

**Administration and Logistics:** Information on support elements such as resources, supplies, personnel, and logistical considerations necessary for the operation.

**Command and Communications:** Details about the command structure, reporting lines, and communication protocols to ensure coordination among all parties involved.

**Safety:** Identification of potential hazards and safety measures to protect personnel and assets during the operation.

## Exercise Termination

The exercise will conclude under the direction of the Exercise Controller, who will declare the official end of the exercise using the term ENDEX. This will occur when the exercise has reached the planned end of the scenario injects or when the Exercise Controller determines that sufficient objectives have been met. The exercise is anticipated to run for 4-6 hours.

### Criteria for Exercise Termination

* **Completion of Scenario Injects:** The exercise will conclude once all planned scenario injects have been delivered and addressed by participants, even if the simulated scenario timeline extends beyond the exercise duration.
* **Sufficient Progress:** The Exercise Controller may decide to end the exercise early if participants have sufficiently engaged with the scenario and injects, gaining valuable insights and achieving the exercise's primary objectives within the expected timeframe.
* **Real-World Incident (No Duff):** If an actual emergency or significant incident occurs requiring the attention of participants, the Exercise Controller will immediately halt the exercise, declare a "No Duff" incident, and formally terminate the exercise to ensure participants can respond to the real-world event.

### Post-Termination Activities

Following ENDEX, participants and EXCON team members will transition to post-exercise activities, including initial debriefs and logistical tasks such as restoring the exercise site to its pre-exercise state. These activities will be managed collaboratively by relevant EXCON roles under the direction of the Exercise Controller.

## Public information

Responsibility for media engagement (both real and simulated) during the emergency exercise rests with the LEMC / REMC, coordinated through the Public Information Functional Area (PIFA). When real or simulated media involvement is anticipated as part of an exercise, it is recommended that PIFA be actively involved in both the planning and conduct phases to ensure effective communication management.

In cases where combat and support agencies anticipate media engagement as part of their exercise roles, agency representatives should coordinate with their respective media departments and consider involving agency media personnel in the exercise.

Regardless of anticipated media activity, all participating organisations are advised to inform their internal media departments about the exercise to facilitate smooth communication and alignment.

## Evaluation Plan

### Purpose of evaluation

The primary purpose of exercise evaluation is to assess both the effectiveness of the exercise and how well it met its stated aims and objectives.

A rigorous evaluation process enables planners and operational managers to systematically enhance future exercises, as well as related procedures, processes, and operational initiatives. Through observation, data collection, analysis, and reporting, evaluation transforms insights gained from the exercise into practical improvements for future operations.

Exercise evaluation involves a series of post-exercise activities focused on:

* Gathering feedback and assessing the conduct of the exercise
* Collecting insights on participant experiences
* Evaluating the achievement of exercise objectives
* Transferring lessons learned into lesson management systems

### Process of Evaluation

To facilitate a smooth and effective evaluation, an Exercise Evaluation Coordinator should be appointed prior to the exercise. The Coordinator’s primary role is to manage the overall evaluation process and lead the team of evaluators.

One or more evaluators should be appointed to assist with data collection and observation throughout the exercise. The number of evaluators required will depend on the exercise cohort size and the volume of data to be gathered. For smaller groups, the Exercise Coordinator may take on both evaluator and coordinator roles (see Attachment: EXCON Staff Responsibilities for the full list of Coordinator and Evaluator responsibilities).

### Data Collection & Observation

Data and observations will be gathered during and after the exercise using the following tools:

* Participant Feedback Form
* After-Action Review Debrief Forms
* Evaluator’s Observation Checklist

Templates for these forms are provided in the Exercise Evaluation Plan. EXCON staff may implement additional data collection methods as appropriate.

### Data Analysis

Upon completing the exercise, evaluators will return all completed data collection tools to the Exercise Evaluation Coordinator. The Coordinator will then compile and analyse the collected data and observations, documenting insights and lessons in the analysis tables within the Evaluation Plan.

### Exercise Report

Following data analysis, the Coordinator will prepare an exercise report on behalf of the Exercise Director, summarising key findings and lessons learned.

The final exercise and evaluation reports are to be submitted to the Premier’s Department and will contribute to the annual State Lessons Analysis process.

Any collateral generated from the exercise (e.g., photos, videos, case studies) should also be provided to the Premier’s Department to support a shared resource cache for agency reference and use.

### Exercise Debriefs

An essential component of a successful exercise is the ability to debrief the activities of the conduct phase. A series of debriefs will be required at the conclusion of an exercise. Depending on the scale of the exercise these may include:

* informal ‘hot’ debrief (immediately post-exercise) for:
* Participants
* EXCON
* formal debriefs for:
* role players
* organisation-specific debrief
* a formal multi-organisation debriefs involving all participants and EXCON team members
* exercise management debrief.

In all cases the debrief must be planned and communicated to all those who need to be involved.

During the debrief process, detailed information is collected at a lower level, with that information contributing to higher-level and subsequent debriefs.

Refer to the accompanying ‘Exercise Evaluation Plan’ for the AAR Debrief Observation Form.

### Exercise Reporting

Exercise evaluation should result in the development of an exercise report, however brief, that describes what happened, identifying good performances, opportunities for improvement and makes recommendations.

For a small exercise there may be one evaluator who produces a one-page report. For a large exercise there may be several individual evaluator reports that need to be analysed and summarised into the final exercise report.

The Exercise Evaluation Coordinator may be asked to draft the exercise report. Exercise reports should be produced to effect change and improvements. Reports do not have to be extensive to achieve that. Exercise reports should clearly identify areas or issues to be improved. They should include enough context for each issue or provide links to that context. If opportunities for improvement or recommendations are identified, they can be included.

The Exercise Director is responsible for finalising the exercise report and then sending it to those responsible for resolving the opportunities for improvement or recommendations that have been identified.

Refer to the accompanying ‘Exercise Evaluation Plan’ for the Exercise Report template.

## Budget

The 2024-25 Emergency Management Exercise Program has funding allocated for the 2024-25 Financial Year.

REMCs can apply for up to $10,000 (ex GST) per functional exercise.

Funding outside of this scope may be considered by the Premier’s Department and subject to negotiations direct with the proponent.

### Co-contributions

Co-contribution is encouraged. Applicants should identify the funding and other in-kind support they propose to allocate and identify if there are contributions from another source (e.g. agency budgets, government grant programs, etc). This should be referenced in the application.

Any co-contribution is considered in addition to the funding provided by the Premier’s Department.

### Unspent Funds

Where LEMCs and REMCs will not require reimbursement of the full allocation of funds identified in the expression of interest process, they are to notify the Premier’s Department by mid-May 2025.

### Anticipated Expenses

Anticipated expenses associated with the conduct of the exercise may include, but not be limited to:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Expense** | **Responsible Entity** |
| Venue Hire | LEMC / REMC |
| Catering | LEMC / REMC |
| Staffing | Individual Agencies / Organisations |
| Travel & Accommodation | Individual Agencies / Organisations |
| Exercise Materials & Documentation | LEMC / REMC |
| Simulated Media & Public Information | LEMC / REMC |
| Role Player Expenses | Individual Agencies / Organisations |
| Technology and Communication Systems | Individual Agencies / Organisations |

## Timeline

Outline the proposed timeline for the exercise.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Responsible | Due by |
| Concept | [INSERT NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON] | [INSERT DUE DATE] |
| Planning | [INSERT NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON] | [INSERT DUE DATE] |
| Conduct | [INSERT NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON] | [INSERT DUE DATE] |
| Evaluation and reporting | [INSERT NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON] | [INSERT DUE DATE] |

## Points of contact

Include person’s name, work area, phone and email.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Position | Contact Details |
| [INSERT NAME] | [INSERT POSITION] | [INSERT CONTACT DETAILS] |
| [INSERT NAME] | [INSERT POSITION] | [INSERT CONTACT DETAILS] |
| [INSERT NAME] | [INSERT POSITION] | [INSERT CONTACT DETAILS] |
| [INSERT NAME] | [INSERT POSITION] | [INSERT CONTACT DETAILS] |

## Approval

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Approved / Not Approved | Approved / Not Approved |
| \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ |
| Name  Title | Name  Title |
| Date | Date |

## Attachments

### Exercise Outputs

The outputs from the exercise conduct and evaluation phases may include:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Conduct Phase** | **Evaluation Phase** |
| * Participant learning * Organisational learning * LEMC/REMC learning * Post exercise report * Observations capture * Lessons identified * Procedure evaluation | * Evaluation Collection Tools * Evaluation Observation Checklist * Debriefing/s * Exercise report * Inputs into lessons management processes * Actions arising from exercise reports are passed to responsible individual / organisations |

### Exercise Program

| Date | Task |
| --- | --- |
| [INSERT DATE] | Exercise collateral developed |
| [INSERT DATE] | Expressions of interest open |
| [INSERT DATE] | Expressions of interest close |
| [INSERT DATE] | Exercises held |
| [INSERT DATE] | Acquittals including exercise and evaluation reports due |

### EXCON Staff Responsibilities

#### Exercise Director

* Appoints Exercise Control Staff and Evaluation Coordinator
* Facilitates exercise planning including time, date, style, scenario and scope
* Facilitates development of all documents including Concept Plan, Master Schedule of Events, Risk Management Plan, Participant Instructions, Control Staff Instructions and Evaluation Plan
* Ensures the exercise stays within scope
* Coordinates the funding, resources, catering, and agencies
* Authorises alterations to the planned program
* Coordinates and prepares the Final Evaluation Report
* Only authorised person to start, suspend or conclude the exercise

#### Exercise Controller

* Manages Master Schedule of Events for the exercise event site
* Manages all Exercise activities relative to the exercise event site
* Ensures adequate opportunities exist to achieve exercise and agency objectives
* Manages safety and risk in accordance with approved plans
* Simulates activities not performed by participants
* Assists and contributes to debriefs
* Contributes to the Exercise Evaluation Report

#### Exercise Planning Coordinator

* Assists in the development of exercise objectives, scope, and scenarios
* Supports the creation of key documents (Concept Plan, Master Schedule, Participant Instructions)
* Identifies and assesses potential risks
* Ensures all planning aligns with the exercise goals and maintains realistic scenarios

#### Activation Cell

* Monitors the progress of the Master Schedule of Events (MSE)
* Introduces scenario injects as planned or directed by the Exercise Controller
* Tracks participant responses to ensure alignment with exercise objectives
* Simulates actions or decisions of organisations not participating in the exercise
* Provides situational updates to the Exercise Controller as required

#### Exercise Evaluation Coordinator

* Appoint and coordinate exercise evaluators
* Provide briefings, guidance, and support to evaluators
* Facilitate after-action reviews, including hot and formal debriefs
* Collate feedback and evaluation reports from both participants and evaluators
* Prepare the exercise evaluation report on behalf of the Exercise Director

#### Exercise Evaluators

* Appointed by Exercise Director or Controller
* No responsibility for the mechanics of the exercise
* Watches and listens to the exercise
* Be fully briefed and know agency objectives and key performance indicators
* Measures and evaluates if activities occur in the right place, at the right time and involve the right people
* Assesses whether exercise objectives are being met
* Makes notes to assist the debrief and Evaluation Report
* Assists or leads the hot debrief for their agency after the exercise
* Assists and contributes to the formal debrief

#### Logistics Coordinator

* Liaises with venue owners or operators
* Coordinates catering and welfare requirements
* Arranges transport of participants and equipment
* Commissions construction of props, models or other elements required for the scenario
* Procures additional equipment, consumables, and resources (e.g. lighting, portable toilets)
* Sets up registration or administration areas for exercise control.

#### Role Play Coordinator

* Recruits, briefs, and manages role players before and during the exercise
* Ensures role players understand their assigned roles and objectives
* Monitors role player welfare, including hydration, rest, and safety
* Coordinates props, if required
* Debriefs role players post-exercise and facilitates de-rolling processes

#### Role Players

* Act in assigned roles to enhance realism, such as media, community members, or other stakeholders
* Follow the parameters and instructions provided by the Role Play Coordinator
* Interact with participants to support exercise objectives
* Provide feedback on their interactions during debriefs

#### Observer Coordinator

* Develops and distributes observer joining instructions, including briefing materials
* Ensures observers are escorted to designated viewing areas
* Briefs observers on the exercise scenario, objectives, and expected conduct
* Manages observer movement to minimise disruption to the exercise
* Facilitates observer feedback sessions post-exercise

#### Observers

* Observe the exercise from designated areas without interfering with participants
* Take note of key activities, outcomes, or lessons learned
* Provide feedback to the Observer Coordinator during post-exercise debriefs

#### Safety Officer

* Monitors exercise activities to ensure safety protocols are followed
* Immediately intervenes if safety is compromised
* Reports safety concerns or incidents to the Exercise Controller
* Provides pre-exercise safety briefings to participants and EXCON staff
* Maintains a presence in high-risk areas throughout the exercise

[INSERT ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AS REQUIRED]

### Exercise Briefings and Debriefings

#### Briefings

Use the table below to document each planned briefing, specifying the type of briefing, target audience, presenter, and scheduled timing. This will help ensure all briefings are organised and delivered as planned.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Briefing Type** | **Target Audience** | **Presenter** | **Scheduled Timing** |
| eg. Pre-Exercise Briefing | All participants | John Smith | Immediately before exercise |
| [INSERT BRIEFING TYPE] | [INSERT TARGET AUDIENCE] | [INSERT PRESENTER NAME] | [INSERT SCHEDULED TIMING] |
| [INSERT BRIEFING TYPE] | [INSERT TARGET AUDIENCE] | [INSERT PRESENTER NAME] | [INSERT SCHEDULED TIMING] |
| [INSERT BRIEFING TYPE] | [INSERT TARGET AUDIENCE] | [INSERT PRESENTER NAME] | [INSERT SCHEDULED TIMING] |
| [INSERT BRIEFING TYPE] | [INSERT TARGET AUDIENCE] | [INSERT PRESENTER NAME] | [INSERT SCHEDULED TIMING] |
| [INSERT BRIEFING TYPE] | [INSERT TARGET AUDIENCE] | [INSERT PRESENTER NAME] | [INSERT SCHEDULED TIMING] |

All briefings should be delivered using the SMEACS briefing format

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section** | **Content** |
| Situation | Provide a brief overview of the current situation or context that necessitates action or response.  eg; "A fire has broken out in the facility’s kitchen area, requiring an evacuation and activation of emergency response procedures." |
| Mission | Clearly state the objective or purpose of the operation or response.  eg: "The mission is to ensure all personnel evacuate safely and assess the effectiveness of emergency response procedures." |
| Execution | Outline specific tasks, roles, and the sequence of actions expected to achieve the mission.  eg: "Personnel will follow assigned evacuation routes, report to assembly points, and respond to communications from the control team." |
| Administration & Logistics | Detail logistical arrangements, including available resources, equipment, and other support requirements.  eg: "The designated assembly area will be in the parking lot, with first aid kits and radios distributed to team leaders." |
| Command & Control | Define who is in charge, clarify the command structure, and specify reporting lines and communication protocols.  eg: "The Incident Commander is in charge; all team leaders report to them, and communication will occur over designated radio channels." |
| Safety | Highlight safety precautions, potential risks, and any procedures to ensure participant safety.  eg: "Use marked evacuation routes only. The term ‘No Duff’ will be used to indicate a real emergency. First aid is available on-site if needed." |

#### Debriefs

Use the table below to document each planned debrief, specifying the type of debrief, target audience, presenter, and scheduled timing. This will help ensure all debriefs are organised and delivered as planned.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Debrief Type** | **Target Audience** | **Presenter** | **Scheduled Timing** |
| eg. Hot AAR Debrief | Exercise participants | John Smith | Immediately after exercise termination |
| [INSERT DEBRIEF TYPE] | [INSERT TARGET AUDIENCE] | [INSERT PRESENTER NAME] | [INSERT SCHEDULED TIMING] |
| [INSERT DEBRIEF TYPE] | [INSERT TARGET AUDIENCE] | [INSERT PRESENTER NAME] | [INSERT SCHEDULED TIMING] |
| [INSERT DEBRIEF TYPE] | [INSERT TARGET AUDIENCE] | [INSERT PRESENTER NAME] | [INSERT SCHEDULED TIMING] |
| [INSERT DEBRIEF TYPE] | [INSERT TARGET AUDIENCE] | [INSERT PRESENTER NAME] | [INSERT SCHEDULED TIMING] |
| [INSERT DEBRIEF TYPE] | [INSERT TARGET AUDIENCE] | [INSERT PRESENTER NAME] | [INSERT SCHEDULED TIMING] |

### Roles & Responsibilities Checklist

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Role** | **Checklist** |
| Exercise Director | **Before Exercise**   * Approve exercise aim, objectives, and key documentation. * Confirm and authorise budget and resources with stakeholders. * Appoint and authorise all EXCON roles, including the Exercise Facilitator. * Finalise and communicate the exercise date, time, and venue to all stakeholders. * Confirm communication protocols with key stakeholders and external agencies to ensure alignment. * Review the scenario with the Exercise Planning Coordinator. * Schedule a high-level briefing for senior leaders or stakeholders on objectives, scenario, and expected outcomes. * Authorise any required changes to the exercise program or plan.   **During Exercise**   * Authorise commencement, termination, or suspension of the exercise as needed. * Supervise the conduct phase to ensure alignment with objectives. * Monitor participant engagement and authorise adjustments as necessary. * Coordinate real-time adjustments with EXCON and facilitators as needed.   **After Exercise**   * Confirm that debriefs and evaluation processes are completed. * Review, approve, and submit the final exercise report to the Premier’s Department, ensuring all findings and recommendations are included. * Verify that all funding reimbursement requests and required documentation are submitted to the relevant authorities.   [Insert additional items as required] |
| Exercise Controller | **Before Exercise**   * Review and understand the Master Schedule of Events (MSE) and timing of activities. * Confirm site-specific activities align with objectives and ensure resources are prepared. * Familiarise yourself with the safety and risk management plan. * Plan and prepare simulations for non-participant activities as required. * Ensure all relevant parties are briefed, delivering pre-exercise briefings if needed.   **During Exercise**   * Oversee and manage the timing and execution of the MSE, adjusting as necessary. * Monitor exercise activities to ensure alignment with objectives, adjusting flow as needed. * Actively manage site safety, responding to incidents according to the risk plan. * Simulate activities not performed by participants as required. * Facilitate participant engagement to meet exercise and agency objectives.   **After Exercise**   * Participate in debrief sessions, providing feedback on exercise flow and participant engagement. * Contribute observations and insights to the Exercise Evaluation Report. * Complete and submit safety and incident reports for any incidents during the exercise. * Assist in facilitating and leading debriefs as needed.   [Insert additional items as required] |
| Exercise Planning Coordinator | Before Exercise   * Develop and finalise the detailed exercise plan. * Confirm roles, responsibilities, and appointments within the EXCON structure. * Finalise all required documents (evaluation plans, injects, scenarios). * Complete the scenario and injects, ensuring all elements are fully developed and aligned with objectives. * Distribute essential documents (exercise plans, participant handbooks, role assignments) to all participants and controllers in advance. * Coordinate pre-exercise briefings and distribute exercise materials. * Establish and confirm a clear communication plan among participants, EXCON, and evaluators. * Conduct a risk assessment and prepare necessary documentation.   **During Exercise**   * Coordinate with the Exercise Controller on inject timings and scenario adjustments as needed.   **After Exercise**   * Participate in debrief and evaluation processes.   [Insert additional items as required] |
| Activation Cell | **Before Exercise**   * Review the Master Schedule of Events (MSE) and timeline for injects. * Familiarise yourself with the scenario details and injects. * Prepare materials and tools for delivering injects (e.g., scripts, email templates, props). * Conduct a dry run of the scenario to ensure timing and flow are practical. * Coordinate with the Exercise Controller to confirm inject delivery methods.   **During Exercise**   * Monitor the progress of the exercise and ensure injects are delivered on schedule. * Adapt injects in real time if needed to align with exercise objectives. * Track participant actions and decisions in response to injects. * Communicate inject delivery status and exercise flow updates to the Exercise Controller.   **After Exercise**   * Compile notes on participant responses to injects for debriefing purposes. * Participate in the post-exercise debrief to provide insights into scenario flow and inject effectiveness.   [Insert additional items as required] |
| Exercise Evaluation Coordinator | **Before Exercise**   * Assign evaluators to specific exercise components, ensuring full coverage. * Brief and train evaluators on observation techniques and assessment criteria. * Distribute evaluation tools, including observation templates and data collection methods. * Conduct a pre-exercise calibration meeting to review objectives, standards, and scoring criteria. * Prepare feedback mechanisms (e.g., feedback forms, debrief sessions) for gathering insights. * Identify key observation points at the venue and station evaluators strategically.   **During Exercise**   * Support and coordinate evaluators, providing resources and assistance as needed. * Oversee observation collection to ensure validity and consistency with evaluation standards.   **After Exercise**   * Ensure after-action reviews (AARs) and debriefs are conducted, leading them as required. * Collate and analyse evaluator reports to identify key findings and improvement areas. * Draft the final exercise report, consolidating observations, feedback, and recommendations.   [Insert additional items as required] |
| Exercise Evaluators | **Before Exercise**   * Review exercise objectives, evaluation criteria, and assigned focus areas. * Familiarise yourself with observation tools and data collection methods.   **During Exercise**   * Observe participant actions and interactions according to assigned objectives. * Record observations accurately, focusing on performance, decision-making, and communication. * Coordinate with the Evaluation Coordinator for any needed clarification or guidance.   **After Exercise**   * Conduct debriefs as required. * Submit completed observation notes and any supporting documentation. * Participate in debrief sessions, sharing insights and feedback on observations.   [Insert additional items as required] |
| Logistics Coordinator | **Before Exercise**   * Book the venue, ensuring it meets all setup requirements. * Arrange catering based on participant needs and confirm service details. * Send invites and agendas to all participants with event details and expectations. * Confirm all technical requirements (audio-visual aids, communication devices). * Prepare props and any special equipment needed for the exercise. * Visit the venue to confirm setup, ensuring equipment (projectors, seating, staging areas) is in place. * Arrange clear signage to direct participants, observers, and evaluators to appropriate areas. * Arrange inventory supplies, such as name badges, safety equipment, notepads, and pens. * Confirm transportation and parking arrangements, providing relevant information to participants.   **During Exercise**   * Open and prepare the venue, ensuring all areas are ready for use. * Confirm catering has arrived, is laid out, and is maintained throughout the event. * Address any logistical needs as they arise to support the smooth flow of activities.   **After Exercise**   * Participate in debrief sessions, providing insights on logistics and venue setup. * Contribute feedback and observations to the evaluation report.   [Insert additional items as required] |
| Role Play Coordinator | **Before Exercise**   * Recruit, brief, and assign role players to their specific roles. * Prepare detailed scripts, instructions, and materials for role players. * Conduct training sessions or rehearsals to ensure role players understand their responsibilities. * Ensure role players’ welfare needs (e.g., hydration, meals) are planned for during the exercise.   **During Exercise**   * Monitor role player performance and provide guidance as needed. * Address any welfare issues or concerns raised by role players. * Ensure role players adhere to the scenario and do not disrupt the exercise flow.   **After Exercise**   * Facilitate the de-rolling process for role players to ensure psychological safety. * Collect feedback from role players and incorporate it into the post-exercise debrief. * Return all props and materials to the logistics team.   [Insert additional items as required] |
| Role Players | **Before Exercise**   * Attend briefing sessions to understand assigned roles and scenarios. * Review the objectives of the exercise and your expected contributions. * Ensure you have any required props, costumes, or scripts for your role. * Ask the Role Play Coordinator for clarification on role expectations.   **During Exercise**   * Perform assigned roles according to the scenario script and instructions. * Interact with participants in a way that aligns with exercise objectives. * Maintain professionalism and stay within the role parameters provided.   **After Exercise**   * Attend the post-exercise debrief for role players to provide feedback on your experience. * Participate in the de-rolling process to transition out of the exercise mindset. * Submit any props or materials provided by EXCON staff.   [Insert additional items as required] |
| Observer Coordinator | **Before Exercise**   * Develop and distribute observer joining instructions, including the exercise agenda and objectives. * Confirm a designated viewing area that does not interfere with exercise activities. * Coordinate with logistics to ensure observer needs (e.g., seating, refreshments) are met.   **During Exercise**   * Escort observers to the designated viewing area and provide a scenario briefing. * Ensure observers do not disrupt exercise activities or interact with participants. * Address observer questions without interfering with exercise flow.   **After Exercise**   * Collect feedback from observers about their experience. * Provide a summary of observer comments during the post-exercise debrief.   [Insert additional items as required] |
| Observers | **Before Exercise**   * Review joining instructions and familiarise yourself with the exercise objectives. * Attend any pre-exercise observer briefings, if scheduled.   **During Exercise**   * Observe the exercise from the designated viewing area without interfering. * Take notes on observed activities, outcomes, or areas for improvement.   **After Exercise**   * Submit feedback to the Observer Coordinator. * Participate in observer debrief sessions, if invited.   [Insert additional items as required] |
| Safety Officer | **Before Exercise**   * Review the safety and risk management plan for the exercise. * Familiarise yourself with the exercise layout, activities, and any identified risks. * Conduct a safety briefing for all participants and EXCON team members. * Ensure the availability of safety equipment (e.g., first aid kits, emergency exits).   **During Exercise**   * Monitor all exercise activities to ensure compliance with safety protocols. * Immediately intervene and report any safety breaches or incidents to the Exercise Controller. * Document safety concerns or incidents in real time.   **After Exercise**   * Participate in debrief sessions to provide a summary of safety observations. * Submit incident reports and recommendations to the Exercise Controller.   [Insert additional items as required] |