

2023 Long Term Care Association Fall Tabletop Exercise

Situation Manual
September 26, 2023

This Situation Manual (Sit Man) provides exercise participants with all the necessary tools for their roles in the exercise. Some exercise material is intended for the exclusive use of exercise planners, facilitators, and evaluators, but players may view other materials that are necessary to their performance. All exercise participants may view the Sit Man.

Exercise Overview

Exercise Name	2023 Long Term Care Association Fall Tabletop Exercise
Exercise Dates	September 26, 2023
Scope	This exercise is a Table Top Exercise planned for approximately two hours in person at the North Dakota Long Term Care Association fall conference in Fargo, ND.
Mission Area(s)	Response and Recovery
Core Capabilities	Community Preparedness Public Information and Warning Planning
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess your facility’s ability to implement an internal emergency management system 2. Evaluate the internal and external communications systems 3. Evaluate the facility's capability to maintain continuity of care for residents during emergency event.
Threat or Hazard	Collision of two semi-trucks; one is carrying ammonium nitrate fertilizer and the other crude oil.
Scenario	A semi-truck carrying ammonium nitrate fertilizer has collided with another semi carrying crude oil near your facility. Heavy smoke, explosion hazard, and loss of power are a concern. Long-term care facilities and response agencies need to respond to the incident.
Sponsor	Fargo Cass Public Health
Participating Organizations	North Dakota Health and Human Services North Dakota Long Term Care Facilities Fargo Cass Public Health North Dakota Long Term Care Association
Point of Contact	Hunter Hubrig Emergency Preparedness Environmental Health Practitioner Fargo Cass Public Health 701.476.4067 HHubrig@FargoND.gov

General Information

Exercise Objectives and Core Capabilities

The following exercise objectives describe the expected outcomes for the exercise. The objectives are linked to core capabilities, which are distinct critical elements necessary to achieve the specific mission area(s). The objectives and aligned core capabilities are guided by elected and appointed officials and selected by the Exercise Planning Team.

Exercise Objective	Core Capability
Assess your facility's ability to implement an internal emergency management system (Incident Command System) during an emergency event.	Planning Intelligence and Information Sharing
Evaluate the facility's capability to maintain continuity of care for residents despite the potential loss of power and potential disruption of normal operations.	Community Preparedness, Emergency Operations Coordination
Evaluate the internal and external communications systems that will be utilized during an emergency shelter-in-place and evacuation event.	Public Information and Warning, Information Sharing

This tabletop exercise is designed to assist North Dakota Long Term Care facilities in exercising, evaluating, and validating their emergency plans, policies and procedures.

Within the context of your individual plans, policies and procedures, this exercise will:

1. Assess your facility's ability to implement an internal emergency management system (Incident Command System) during an emergency event.
2. Evaluate the internal and external communications systems that will be utilized during an emergency shelter-in-place and evacuation event.
3. Evaluate the facility's capability to maintain continuity of care for residents despite the potential loss of power and potential disruption of normal operations.

Participants

- **Players.** Players respond to the situation presented, based on expert knowledge of response procedures, current plans and procedures, and insights derived from training.
- **Observers.** Observers support the group in developing responses to the situation during the discussion; they are not participants in the moderated discussion period, however.
- **Facilitators.** Facilitators provide situation updates and moderate discussions. They also provide additional information or resolve questions as required. Key Exercise Planning Team members also may assist with facilitation as subject matter experts (SMEs) during the TTX.

Exercise Structure

This exercise will be a multimedia, facilitated exercise. Players will participate in the following three modules:

- Module 1: The Event
- Module 2: Seeing Through the Smoke
- Module 3: Decision Time

Each module begins with a multimedia update that summarizes key events occurring within that time. After the updates, participants review the situation and engage in discussions of appropriate response and recovery issues.

Exercise Guidelines

- This exercise will be held in an open, low-stress, no-fault environment. Varying viewpoints, even disagreements, are expected.
- Respond to the scenario using your knowledge of current plans and capabilities (i.e., you may use only existing assets) and insights derived from your training.
- Decisions are not precedent setting and may not reflect your organization's final position on a given issue. This exercise is an opportunity to discuss and present multiple options and possible solutions.
- Issue identification is not as valuable as suggestions and recommended actions that could improve response and recovery efforts. Problem-solving efforts should be the focus.

Exercise Assumptions and Artificialities

In any exercise, assumptions and artificialities may be necessary to complete play in the time allotted and/or account for logistical limitations. Exercise participants should accept that assumptions and artificialities are inherent in any exercise, and should not allow these considerations to negatively impact their participation. During this exercise, the following apply:

- The exercise is conducted in a no-fault learning environment wherein capabilities, plans, systems, and processes will be evaluated.
- The exercise scenario is plausible, and events occur as they are presented.
- All players receive information at the same time.
- Please consider your facility needs at the current moment within this exercise. Assume this scenario will impact you within your local community.

Exercise Evaluation

Evaluation of the exercise is based on the exercise objectives and aligned capabilities, capability targets, and critical tasks, which are documented in Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs). Evaluators have EEGs for each of their assigned areas. Additionally, players will be asked to complete participant feedback forms. These documents, coupled with facilitator observations and notes, will be used to evaluate the exercise and compile the After-Action Report (AAR).

MODULE 1: The Event

Your facility is approximately 1 ½ miles away from the upcoming incident. There is a north wind blowing south at 30 mph, with gusts up to 45 mph.

September 26: 0600

A north bound semi carrying ammonium nitrate fertilizer, enters the south side of your city, traveling at a speed of 65 mph. A merging semi carrying crude oil collides with the semi-truck causing both trucks to swerve and lose control. The crude oil trailer ignites in flame, raising concerns about a potential explosion from the ammonium nitrate trailer.



September 26: 0603

A cloud of thick black smoke begins to move over the town, including your facility.

September 26: 0615 Hours

The local health department has issued a public health advisory regarding the plume of smoke. They state excessive exposure to the smoke can cause irritation to the nose, throat, lungs, and respiratory tract. Access and functional needs groups such as children, elderly individuals, and individuals with pre-existing respiratory conditions are more at risk for adverse effects. The fire department has issued a shelter-in-place alert for anyone within the plume.

Key Issues

- On-Scene incident command
- Activation of emergency management plan
- Communications
- First priorities and life safety for access and functional needs

Questions

Based on the information provided, participate in the discussion concerning the issues raised in Module 1. Identify any additional requirements, critical issues, decisions, or questions that should be addressed at this time.

The following questions are provided as suggested general subjects that you may wish to address as the discussion progresses. These questions are not meant to constitute a definitive list of concerns to be addressed, nor is there a requirement to address every question.

1. Who is in charge initially at your facility to make decisions after your facility learns of the incident?
2. Are there any safety concerns for your residents at this time? Do staff know how to shelter-in-place and to prepare the residents?
3. Does your facility utilize the Incident Command Structure (ICS) and does your emergency management plan identify a pre-established incident command post within your facility?
4. Who within the facility should be responsible for monitoring official updates and communication channels related to the incident?
5. How will this information be disseminated to the rest of the staff and residents at the time of learning of the incident?
6. How would staff manage residents' emotional well-being and alleviate any anxiety caused by the shelter-in-place situation?

MODULE 2: Seeing Through the Smoke

September 26: 0700 Hours

The local fire department and hazardous materials (HAZMAT) team are having a hard time controlling the fire and the explosion hazard of the additional semi-truck is endangering the lives of first responders. Due to these extreme life safety conditions, the HAZMAT team has to pull back as the threat for a massive explosion remains high.

September 26: 0715 Hours

Amidst the mass media coverage of this incident, a rumor has rapidly spread on social media that a resident has died from smoke inhalation due to the plume. There is also speculation your facility did not take the proper precautions to protect residents. Neither is true. Local media is calling about the resident. Family members are overwhelming the switchboard worried about their loved ones, and some family members are showing up at the facility.

September 26: 0730 Hours

The shelter-in-place is still in effect, but there is a scheduled shift change for your staff. Facility management needs to determine if they will continue with change in shift or ask staff to stay.

Key Issues

- Resident and staff safety
- Information management (family, staff, community, residents, and media)
- Message delivery

Questions

Based on the information provided, participate in the discussion concerning the issues raised in Module 2. Identify any additional requirements, critical issues, decisions, or questions that should be addressed at this time.

The following questions are provided as suggested general subjects that you may wish to address as the discussion progresses. These questions are not meant to constitute a definitive list of concerns to be addressed, nor is there a requirement to address every question in this section.

1. Would a Public Information Officer (PIO) be identified at this point? Does your emergency management plan identify that position or person?
2. How will you notify family members of the incident? Who will conduct this process? What information will the family be provided? Who would address media inquiries?
3. Explain how you would ensure that all communication is consistent across different channels and platforms to prevent conflicting updates and misinformation.
4. What external agencies, if any, would your facility plan on contacting during the incident?
5. Do staff have a family emergency plan? Does the family emergency plan outline expectations for staff's families, including childcare and elderly care plans?

MODULE 3: Decision Time

September 26: 0800 Hours

The crude oil trailer continues to burn, heating up the ammonium nitrate fertilizer trailer. The ammonium nitrate trailer explodes, creating a massive shockwave. The shockwave reaches an electrical substation powering your facility, blowing transformers off their mounts and snapping electrical lines. Power goes out for many homes and businesses, including your facility.

September 26: 0830 Hours

Your facility has received word from local authorities that they expect power to be out for at LEAST **5 days** due to the substation being heavily damaged. To make matters worse, during the initial power loss, the elevators became inoperable. The switch to backup power did not return the elevators to working status. Thankfully, no individuals were in the elevator at the time of power loss.

September 26: 1100 Hours

With the power outage persisting, the facility implements emergency lighting and backup power for critical areas. Residents are oriented to the situation, and staff organizes a calm and reassuring environment to reduce anxiety. Staff focuses on conserving resources and preparing for the possibility of an extended power outage as local authorities provide updates on the repair progress.

September 26: 1200 Hours

The facility continues to operate on emergency backup power, but problems arise with the facility's backup power supply. With potential issues with emergency power, and the unknown of how long power will be out to the facility, leaders need to discuss the options of staying in place or a potential resident evacuation.

Key Issues

- Backup power
- Safe evacuation for residents
- Transport of residents, medical equipment, records, and medications
- Financial considerations

Questions

Based on the information provided, participate in the discussion concerning the issues raised in Module 3. Identify any additional requirements, critical issues, decisions, or questions that should be addressed at this time.

The following questions are provided as suggested general subjects that you may wish to address as the discussion progresses. These questions are not meant to constitute a definitive list of concerns to be addressed, nor is there a requirement to address every question in this section.

1. Does your facility have confidence that the backup power will be sufficient to meet the facility and resident's needs for at least 5 days? What are some backup power issues the facility staff need to consider?
2. Who would your facility request resources from to continue operations without power?
3. Who has the authority to request an evacuation of the facility? Is this decision made primarily by one individual or as part of a decision making team (Unified Command)?
4. How many people would you estimate would be required to facilitate the safe evacuation for your entire facility? What facility(s) will your residents go to? Who determines this? If your facility is not affected, would your facility be able to take in evacuated residents?
5. Are employees trained on emergency movement of residents? If elevators are not functional, are there procedures in place to move residents down stairwells, if applicable?
6. How would you compensate and adjust for loss of revenue during the event? Does your emergency management plan define an individual who would keep track of reimbursements? If it's not a mandatory evacuation, what are some financial considerations (ex: insurance)?

Appendix A: Exercise Schedule

Note: Because this information is updated throughout the exercise planning process, appendices may be developed as stand-alone documents rather than part of the Sit Man.

Time	Activity
September 26, 2023	
1000	Welcome and Opening Remarks on Exercise
1010	Module 1: Briefing, Discussion, and Brief-Back
1040	Module 2: Briefing, Discussion, and Brief-Back
1110	Module 3: Briefing, Discussion, and Brief-Back
1155	Closing Comments
1200	End of Exercise

Appendix B: Exercise Participants

Participating Organizations
Fargo Cass Public Health
North Dakota Health and Human Services
North Dakota Long Term Care Association