

EMERGENCY EXERCISE PLANNING TEMPLATE

Purpose

This template supports the planning and coordination of emergency exercising activities across commercial building and operational environments. It is designed to help organisations develop practical, scenario-based exercises that validate emergency procedures, communication pathways, coordination arrangements and operational decision-making processes.

The template encourages structured and realistic exercising activities that support operational preparedness, identify improvement opportunities and strengthen capability across a range of emergency scenarios.

Reference Note:

The Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience (AIDR) Handbook 3: Managing Exercises, which provides the recognised Australian framework for the planning and conduct of exercises, has been considered in the development of this template.

Who Should Use This Template

This template is intended for personnel responsible for planning, coordinating or facilitating emergency exercising activities.

Typical users may include:

- Building managers
- Security managers or supervisors
- Emergency planning and preparedness personnel
- Risk, resilience or business continuity personnel
- Exercise facilitators or coordinators

The template may be used for discussion-based, coordination-focused or operational exercising activities across different building environments and preparedness maturity levels.

Instruction Notes

Use this template to plan and document an exercise for your building or site. It helps you define:

- What the exercise is about
- Who will be involved
- The scenario being tested
- What participants are expected to do

The template may also be used to identify key capabilities or objectives being tested, including:

- Decision-making;
- Communication;
- Coordination;
- Situational awareness; and
- Roles and responsibilities.

Steps to Complete the Exercise Plan

1. Complete the basic exercise details
 - Record the exercise name, date, participants and facilitator.
2. Describe the scenario
 - Outline how the scenario starts, how it develops over time, and any key challenges.
3. List the exercise prompts (injects)
 - Add prompts in the order they will be delivered during the exercise.
4. Align prompts to objectives
 - Ensure each prompt supports what the exercise is intended to test.
5. Keep information clear and practical
 - Use simple, concise language so the exercise is easy to understand and facilitate.

Focus on realistic actions and responses, particularly in the early stages of an incident. After the exercise, use the template to capture observations, lessons identified and any follow-up actions. This helps ensure exercises lead to practical improvements, not just discussion and supports ongoing capability development over time.

EXERCISE DETAILS	
Exercise Name	
Date	
Building / Site	
Exercise Type	
Scenario Type	
Facilitator	

PARTICIPANT DETAILS		
Participants	Involved? (Y/N)	Notes
Building Management		
Wardens / Floor Staff		
Tenants / Occupants		
Contractors		
Emergency Services		
Neighbouring Buildings		
Other (please specify)		

EXERCISE ELEMENTS	
Element	Description
Situation (brief description of the scenario)	
Trigger (how the scenario starts)	
Escalation (how it develops over time)	
Key challenges (e.g. limited information, system failure, time pressure)	
Information available to participants (e.g. limited information, conflicting reports, delayed updates)	

EXERCISE TIMELINE					
Prompt No.	Actual Time	Exercise Time	What Happens? (Inject)	What is Being Tested?	Expected Actions
Example	09:00	09:10	Fire alarm sounds	Activation of emergency response procedures, including communication processes and role-based response arrangements	Assemble ECO
1					
2					
3					
4					

EXERCISE TIMELINE (continued)					
Prompt No.	Actual Time	Exercise Time	What Happens? (Inject)	What is Being Tested?	Expected Actions
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					

EXERCISE PLANNING PROMPTS

Area	Prompt	Notes
Safety	Are there any risks to participants?	
Realism	How realistic does the exercise need to be?	
Communication	Who will information be shared with during the exercise (e.g. actual stakeholders or exercise control)?	
Observers	Who will capture observations?	

SUCCESS TRACKING

Success Indicators		Notes
☐	Objectives were tested effectively	
☐	Participants understood their roles	
☐	Key gaps were identified	
☐	Actions were captured	

EXERCISE CLOSING CHECKLIST

Output	Completed? (Y/N)	Notes
Observations captured		
Debrief completed		
Lessons identified		
Actions logged		
Actions assigned and tracked		