



Writing exercise plans and facilitator guides





Writing exercise plans and facilitator guides



We need:

1. Preparation (Before writing begins)
2. Writing the exercise plan (Player-facing document)
3. Writing the facilitator guides (Controller/evaluator document)
4. Writing supporting documents
5. Timing & control of play (a 'Master Scenario Events List', MSEL)
6. Finalisation and pre-testing



Writing exercise plans and facilitator guides

1. Preparation (Before writing begins)

Key Notes

- The plan must align with emergency plans/SOPs
- Modular exercise documentation: players, controllers/facilitators, evaluators.
- Define what is being tested!
e.g., sampling, lab surge, zoning, depopulation, communication

Tasks

- Define target areas
- Confirm scope, type and boundaries
- Map stakeholders
- Appoint exercise management team.





Writing exercise plans and facilitator guides

2. Writing the exercise plan (Player-facing document)

Key Notes

- Given to all players
 - Set expectations, rules, structure
 - NOT injects, solutions, or detailed scenario logic
- Operational and clear

Tasks

1. Purpose & objectives
2. Exercise scope & type
3. Scenario summary (no surprises!)
4. Rules of play
5. Logistics & Administration
6. Timing and schedule
7. Target participant roles & numbers





Writing exercise plans and facilitator guides

3. Writing the facilitator guide (Controller/evaluator document)

Key Notes

- Not shared with players!
- Scenario and its evolution with injects, timing, expected actions, evaluation prompts...

Tasks

1. Inject Master List (MSEL)
2. Detailed scenario timeline
3. Facilitator roles & responsibilities
4. Control and simulation rules
5. Evaluation guidance
6. Safety and welfare





Writing exercise plans and facilitator guides

4. Supporting documents

Tasks

1. Briefing slides
2. Maps & reference materials including regulations
3. Organisational charts, ToRs, SOPs, etc
4. Exercise forms/templates
5. Communications materials





Writing exercise plans and facilitator guides

5. Timing & control of Sim-Ex

Key Notes

- Time management is often the biggest challenge
- Plan time around decision points, not the clock
- Allow flexibility: real-world decisions might take longer

Tasks

- Build a timeline matrix (inject × time × objective)
- Prepare a “fast-forward” tool to advance the scenario
- Decide when to conclude each phase (detection → suspicion → confirmation → response)
- Schedule hot-wash and feedback windows





Writing exercise plans and facilitator guides

6. Finalisation and pre-testing

Key Notes

- The exercise guide should undergo a “dry run” with the internal management team.
- All controllers must practice delivering injects and coordinating communications.

Tasks

- Internal walk-through with full scenario.
- Debug unclear injects or unrealistic events.
- Confirm that injects map correctly to objectives.
- Freeze final versions and distribute to relevant teams.

