

# **CISA Tabletop Exercise Package**

---

## **Exercise Planner Handbook**

The Exercise Planner Handbook is a guide for the exercise planner(s). This document provides step-by-step instructions on how to plan, develop, and execute the tabletop exercise. The Handbook is distributed only to those individuals specifically designated as planners. It should not be provided to exercise players.

This page is intentionally left blank.

# Table of Contents

<b>The Basics of a Tabletop Exercise .....</b>	<b>1</b>
General Characteristics .....	1
Application.....	1
Leadership.....	1
Duration .....	1
<b>14 Key Steps to a Successful Exercise.....</b>	<b>3</b>
Step 1: Review Documents.....	3
Step 2: Identify the Exercise Planning Team.....	4
Step 3: Hold a Concept and Objectives Meeting.....	5
Step 4: Hold an Initial Planning Meeting .....	5
Step 5: Exercise Development.....	6
Step 6: Hold a Midterm Planning Meeting.....	6
Step 7: Send the Invitation.....	7
Step 8: Continue Exercise Development .....	8
Step 9: Hold a Final Planning Meeting.....	8
Step 10: Print Documents .....	9
Step 11: Conduct the Exercise .....	9
Step 12: Draft After-Action Report / Improvement Plan .....	11
Step 13: After-Action Meeting .....	11
Step 14: Finalize and Distribute the After-Action Report / Improvement Plan .....	11
<b>Appendix A: Adapting Tabletop Exercise Documents .....</b>	<b>A-1</b>
Core Capabilities.....	A-1
Exercise Objectives.....	A-1
Scenario .....	A-2
Discussion Questions .....	A-2
Agenda.....	A-3
Situation Manual.....	A-3
Exercise Brief Slide Deck.....	A-3
Invitation Letter .....	A-4
After-Action Report / Improvement Plan .....	A-4
<b>Appendix B: Tabletop Exercise Development Checklist.....</b>	<b>B-1</b>
<b>Appendix C: Reference List .....</b>	<b>C-1</b>
<b>Appendix D: Acronym List .....</b>	<b>D-1</b>

This page is intentionally left blank.

## **THE BASICS OF A TABLETOP EXERCISE**

A tabletop exercise (TTX) is a facilitated discussion of a scripted scenario in an informal, stress-free environment that is based on current applicable policies, plans, and procedures. The TTX design process facilitates conceptual understanding, identifies strengths and weaknesses, and/or achieves changes in policies and procedures. The success of the exercise depends largely on group participation in the identification of problem areas and the resolution of those problems.

### **General Characteristics**

The exercise begins with a general setting, which establishes the stage for the hypothetical situation. In your exercise, the facilitator stimulates discussion by intelligence or situation updates. These updates describe major events that may be directed to individual players or participating departments, agencies, or organizations. Recipients of the updates then discuss the action(s) they might take in response to the situation / incident.

Finally, the facilitator utilizes key questions which focus on roles (how the players would respond in a real situation), plans, coordination, the effect of decisions on other organizations, and similar concerns to drive the discussion.

A TTX is focused on discussion of roles rather than simulation; equipment and resources do not deploy during a TTX.

### **Application**

A TTX has several important applications: low stress discussion of coordination and policy that establishes a collaborative environment for problem solving; and providing an opportunity for key agencies, organizations, and stakeholders to become acquainted with one another, their interdependencies, and their respective responsibilities.

### **Leadership**

A facilitator leads the exercise discussion, decides who gets a message or problem statement, calls on others to participate, asks questions, and guides the players toward sound decisions.

### **Participation**

Exercise planners should choose players carefully to adequately represent their discipline, agency, or organization. Players ideally should have the authority to speak on behalf of the stakeholders they represent.

### **Duration**

The agenda for each exercise template allows for four hours of exercise play; however, the length is ultimately at your discretion. During the exercise, discussion times are open-ended, and players are encouraged to take their time in arriving at in-depth decisions without time pressure.

Although the facilitator maintains an awareness of the time allocated for each area of discussion, the group does not have to complete every item in order to meet the objectives or for the exercise to be a success.

## 14 KEY STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL EXERCISE

Enclosed you will find instructions and templates to help you conduct an exercise that uses the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) exercise guidance. For additional details regarding exercise design and execution, please refer to the [HSEEP Doctrine](#). **All recommended actions in this guide assume that you will begin planning at least three months before the desired exercise date.**

This section outlines the key actions that will be taken in the exercise planning process. For a complete list of exercise tasks to be completed at each stage of the planning process, please reference Appendix B: Exercise Development Checklist.

### Step 1: Review Documents

**(Task should be accomplished three or more months prior to the actual exercise.)**

Below is a list of supporting exercise documents provided in your TTX:

- **Welcome Letter** – An official letter that describes the purpose of the CISA Tabletop Exercise Package (CTEP) and its content.
- **Exercise Planner Handbook** – This document provides a guide for the exercise planner. It gives step-by-step instructions on how to plan, develop, and execute TTXs using CTEP materials, as well as a list of various reference materials located in Appendix C: Reference List.
- **Invitation Letter Template** – A template of an official invitation letter that an organization may send to the exercise participants (players and observers).
- **Situation Manual (SitMan)** – A manual that provides the scenario, supporting background information, and suggested discussion questions to be posed to the exercise players. Throughout the exercise, players should be encouraged to use the manual to help supplement the information in the Exercise Brief Slide Deck and stimulate discussion.
- **Exercise Brief Slide Deck Template** – A template for a PowerPoint presentation used in conjunction with the SitMan that the exercise facilitator uses to guide players through the scenario, modules, and discussion questions. The template should be updated using the SitMan selected by the planner / planning team.
- **Facilitator & Evaluator Handbook** – This document provides the information needed by facilitators, evaluators, and data collectors. It supplements the SitMan with guidance to assist in capturing information and feedback during the exercise for developing the After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR / IP).
- **Participant Feedback Form** – A form that is mainly used to gather recommendations and key outcomes from the exercise as well as feedback on the exercise design and conduct from the players.

- **Exercise Planner Feedback Form** – A feedback form used by the exercise planners and the facilitator to consolidate players’ feedback on exercise improvement.
- **AAR / IP Template** – A template of an AAR / IP to aid the exercise planner and evaluators / data collectors in developing an HSEEP style AAR / IP.

## Step 2: Identify the Exercise Planning Team

**(Task should be accomplished three or more months prior to the exercise.)**

The exercise planning team (EPT) is vital to the success of any exercise. The planning team is responsible for guiding the development process, obtaining the necessary venue and resources, and should be able to achieve buy-in from their organizations for the exercise. It is recommended that you think carefully about who should be on the planning team and attempt to keep the total number of planning team members manageable. Think about the proposed scenario and exercise goal described, identify those departments and agencies that would be involved in responding to that scenario, and invite those representatives to be members. EPT members will be involved in the details of exercise development and therefore should not be players in the exercise.

Suggestions for planning team members to consider are:

### Internal:

- Owners / Management
- Operations and Maintenance
- Engineering
- Emergency Response
- Security
- Spokesperson / Public Information Officer
- Business Continuity
- Information Technology / Communications

### External:

- Other members of your sector
- State / local Emergency Operation Centers
- State / local emergency management agencies
- State / local law enforcement agencies
- Regional / State / local homeland security / counterterrorism agencies
- State / local fusion centers
- DHS Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency – Protective Security Advisor (PSA)
- Regulating agencies
- Other Federal partners
- International partners
- Key members of your supply chain

## Step 3: Hold a Concept and Objectives Meeting

**(Task should be accomplished three months prior to the exercise.)**

The Concept and Objectives (C&O) Meeting is the formal start to the exercise planning process. It helps planners determine the exercise program priorities to be addressed, design objectives based on those priorities, and identify EPT members. Expected outcomes of a C&O Meeting are:

- Confirmation of EPT members
- Agreement regarding exercise concept (scope, type, mission area[s], exercise program priorities to be addressed), exercise objectives, and aligned core capabilities
- Exercise planning timeline, to include target exercise conduct time frame, with milestones
- List of assigned tasks prior to the next planning meeting, to include reaching out to additional planning team members and developing detailed exercise objectives

## Step 4: Hold an Initial Planning Meeting

**(Task should be accomplished two and a half months prior to the exercise.)**

*Note: The C&O and Initial Planning Meeting (IPM) can be combined to shorten the planning timeline and be less burdensome resource-wise. Should the meetings be run concurrently, the tasks listed for both should be completed.*

The IPM serves to identify exercise design requirements, assumptions and artificialities, scenario variables (e.g., time, location, hazard selection), and exercise logistics, such as exercise location, schedule, duration, participants, and other relevant details. Expected outcomes of the IPM are:

- Exercise scenario
- Clearly defined exercise objectives and aligned core capabilities
- Format of exercise (see below for discussion)
- Finalized exercise planning timeline with exercise conduct logistics
- Confirmation of expected level of effort for all participating organizations
- List of assigned tasks prior to the next planning meeting

### Exercise formats for consideration:

- **Plenary:** In a plenary format, the players organize as a single group without regard for functional area grouping (e.g., owners, management, local representatives; facility security; engineering; law enforcement). This format requires only a single facilitator, as well as one or two evaluator / data collectors; however, a co-facilitator may ease the burden of a single facilitator. This format is generally best for 25-30 players when there are a limited number of people available to fill the roles of facilitator and evaluator / data collector.

- **Multi-Table:** Under a multi-table format, there are multiple individual tables organized by discipline, agency, organization, or functional area. First, a lead facilitator frames the scenario and poses discussion questions to all players. Group discussions occur at the individual tables, ideally facilitated by someone with functional area expertise. If feasible, it is desirable to assign both a facilitator and an evaluator / data collector to each group so that the facilitator can focus on addressing issues related to exercise objectives, while the evaluator / data collector focuses on capturing general discussion issues.

## Step 5: Exercise Development

**(Tasks should be accomplished prior to the Midterm Planning Meeting.)**

In this phase, members of the planning team should complete the assignments given during the first two planning meetings and continue to socialize and build support for the exercise within their own organization. Actions should include logistics necessary to secure a venue for the exercise date and developing a draft SitMan and Facilitator & Evaluator Handbook with the agreed upon objectives and core capabilities.

### Venue Logistics

- Make sure the room is large enough to accommodate all participants and observers and is accessible to both internal and external invitees. It would be beneficial if the required space was open the evening prior to the exercise to setup and work through any technical issues. There should also be an area for the facilitator(s) and evaluator(s) / data collector(s) to meet prior to and after the exercise.
- The room must also have adequate audio / video (A/V) capability in order to run your presentation. A room with adjustable lights is necessary for seeing the projector screen(s), and having at least two wireless microphones to pass around the room is recommended.
- It is always beneficial to book a backup room at another location in case of unforeseen cancellations or other last-minute issues.

## Step 6: Hold a Midterm Planning Meeting (MPM)

**(Task should be accomplished six to eight weeks prior to the exercise.)**

The MPM is the opportunity to discuss exercise staffing and logistics, review the SitMan to include the proposed scenario and discussion questions, and determine the exercise invitation process.

### Exercise staffing:

- **Facilitators.** Facilitators provide situation updates and moderate discussions. They also provide additional information or resolve questions as required. Key EPT members may also assist with facilitation as subject matter experts (SMEs) during the exercise. The planning team should identify a primary choice for facilitator during this planning meeting and who should be responsible for confirming whether they can attend. The planning team should also identify table facilitators if using a multi-table format.

- **Evaluators / Data Collectors.** Evaluators and/or data collectors are assigned to observe and document certain objectives during the exercise. Their primary role is to document player discussions, including how and if those discussions conform to plans, policies, and procedures. The planning team should identify individuals with the skill sets or subject matter expertise to fill these functions. The planning should also identify one or more members of the planning team to collect the input from the evaluators / data collectors following the exercise and put it into a draft AAR / IP.
- **Exercise Staff.** Any exercise should have sufficient personnel to register participants, manage refreshments, support information technology, etc.

**Discussion questions:** The discussion questions provided in the SitMan are suggested general subjects you may wish to address as the discussion progresses. These questions are not meant to constitute a definitive list of concerns to be addressed. You should add, delete, or modify any of the discussion questions to most effectively address the objectives of your exercise and the needs of your organization. The final questions should be based upon the objectives for the exercise, and included in the SitMan.

When determining what discussion questions to include, be sure to keep in mind the time frame allotted for each module, as well as for the overall exercise. It is also recommended the planning team select half a dozen additional individual questions or sub-questions for the facilitator to address if a module is running ahead of schedule. These additional questions should be included in the Facilitator and Evaluator Handbook in italics but should not be included in the SitMan.

**Logistics:** At the MPM, the EPT should confirm exercise logistics, such as estimate of participants, exercise schedule, and venue. It is highly recommended that refreshments be provided. Depending on start and end times, that could include light snacks, breakfast, lunch, or all of the above. This will depend on resources, but experience has shown that exercise participants are much more inclined to engage with exercise material if they are not hungry. The EPT should determine at the MPM what refreshments, if any, will be provided, and who will be responsible for providing them.

#### **Attendees:**

- **Players.** Every exercise will have players. They are personnel who discuss their regular roles and responsibilities during the exercise. They describe what their response to the scenario would be, answer questions, and interact with the facilitator and other players. Players should be chosen carefully to adequately represent their discipline, agency, or organization and must have the authority to speak on its behalf.
- **Observers.** Observers do not generally directly participate in the exercise; however, they may ask relevant questions or provide subject matter expertise if called on by the facilitator.

## **Step 7: Send the Invitation**

**(Task should be accomplished five to seven weeks prior to the exercise.)**

The invitation should come from your organization's management in the form of either an email or signed / scanned letter. The invitation should include the exact date, time, location, and

duration of the exercise; directions to the facility; security / access requirements; and should state whether food / refreshments will be provided. For your use, there is an invitation letter template provided.

Be sure to address all staff and facility access requirements and other needs in the invitation letter. For example, the facility used for the exercise might require a “visitor request form.” In this case, you would ensure all external players fill out the form and return it to you or the appropriate office well before the exercise date. If special parking directions are required, you must include that as well. You can explain the process in words or provide a map.

## Step 8: Continue Exercise Development

**(Task should be accomplished three to four weeks prior to the exercise.)**

The documents provided in the template will need minor adjustments to meet your organization’s needs. There are some sections where that need is obvious (e.g., organization name) and others where it may require more in-depth changes. **Any items that are changed in one of the products will most likely need to be changed throughout the entire package (e.g., Facilitator and Evaluator Handbook, SitMan, and Exercise Brief Slide Deck).** This is also the phase in which all of the discussion question modifications should be made. Please refer to Appendix A of this document for complete instructions on how to adapt all of the documents for your needs. During this period, the documents should be made into as final a version as possible. These documents should be sent to the planning team for review prior to the Final Planning Meeting.

In addition to modifying the exercise documents, the planning team members should finalize any logistical details and continue to build support for the upcoming exercise. Members of the planning team should also confirm the facilitator(s), evaluators / data collectors, and exercise staff during this period.

## Step 9: Hold a Final Planning Meeting (FPM)

**(Task should be accomplished two weeks prior to the exercise.)**

The FPM should focus on ensuring that all elements of the exercise are ready for conduct. No major changes to the exercise’s design or scope should take place at or following the FPM. The FPM ensures that all logistical requirements have been met, outstanding issues have been identified and resolved, and exercise products are ready for printing. Be sure to review the discussion question sets in the SitMan and Facilitator & Evaluator Handbook, and the back-up questions in the Facilitator & Evaluator Handbook to confirm the modifications made earlier in the process. In summary, the following items should be addressed during the FPM:

- Conduct a comprehensive, final review of all exercise documents and presentation materials;
- Resolve any open exercise planning issues and identify last-minute concerns; and
- Review all exercise logistical activities (e.g., schedule, registration, attire, special needs).

## **Step 10: Print Documents**

**(Task should be accomplished one week prior to the exercise.)**

At a minimum, print one SitMan for each participant and a Facilitator & Evaluator Handbook for each facilitator and evaluator / data collector. It is recommended, however, that you print about twenty percent more SitMans than the number of participants that you are expecting. Printing the Exercise Brief Slide Deck and reference documents for each participant is at your discretion.

## **Step 11: Conduct the Exercise**

Exercise conduct involves activities such as preparing for exercise play, managing exercise play (presentation, facilitation, and discussion), and conducting immediate exercise wrap-up activities. Members of the EPT assigned to support exercise setup should visit the exercise site at least one day prior to the event to arrange the room, test A/V equipment, and discuss administrative and logistical issues. On the day of the exercise, planning team members should arrive several hours before the start of the exercise to handle setup activities and arrange for registration.

The presentation typically starts with brief remarks by representatives from the EPT or other high-profile individuals in attendance. After the opening remarks, the presentation moves into a brief introductory and explanatory phase led by a facilitator. During this phase, attendees will be introduced to any other facilitators, given background on the exercise process, and advised about their individual roles and responsibilities.

The facilitator generally presents the multimedia briefing, which describes the scenario and any relevant background information. The facilitator also leads the discussion, poses questions to the audience, and ensures that the schedule remains on track.

In a plenary format, players are organized as a single group, without regard for functional area grouping (e.g., owners, management, and local representatives; facility security; engineering; law enforcement). The facilitator(s) briefs the modules and moderates the questions for the entire group.

Under a multi-table format, there are multiple individual tables organized by discipline, agency, organization, or functional area. A lead facilitator first frames the scenario and poses discussion questions to all players. Group discussions occur at the individual tables, ideally facilitated by someone with subject matter expertise.

After the breakout sessions take place, the entire group typically reconvenes to address any key issues, cross-disciplinary issues, or conflicting recommendations that were identified during group discussions. A player from each group briefs the key points of their discussions to the group at large. Under both formats, players should discuss their responses based on their knowledge of current plans, procedures, and capabilities.

In both formats, a facilitator is responsible for keeping the discussion focused on the exercise objectives and making sure all issues are explored within the time allotted. A good facilitator should possess:

- The ability to keep side conversations to a minimum, keep discussions on track and within established time limits, control group dynamics and strong personalities, and speak competently and confidently about the subject without dominating conversation;
- Functional area expertise or experience;
- Awareness of appropriate plans and procedures; and
- The ability to listen well and summarize player discussions.

If feasible and/or appropriate, co-facilitators who are knowledgeable about local issues, plans, and procedures may assist the lead facilitator. Also, designating a recorder to take notes allows the facilitator to focus on key discussion issues.

Prior to the exercise, instruct the evaluators / data collectors to keep an accurate written record of what is observed. To be reliable, they should take notes as players discuss actions, make decisions, and discuss their capabilities during the exercise. Collect this information at the conclusion of the exercise as these notes will form the basis of the analysis for the AAR / IP. At the conclusion of the exercise, it is also beneficial for the after-action process to conduct a hot wash involving players. A hot wash allows players to self-assess and discuss their performance in the exercise. The hot wash also provides the evaluators / data collectors with the opportunity to clarify points or collect any missing information from the players before they leave the exercise.

To supplement the information collected during the player hot wash, the evaluation team distributes participant feedback forms (template included in SSTEP package) to elicit responses from participants regarding the observed strengths and areas for improvement. At a minimum, the questions on this feedback form should solicit the following:

- Substantive information on the most pertinent issues discussed and potential corrective actions to address these issues.
- Impressions about exercise conduct and logistics.

Once the hot wash is finished, collect all the participant feedback forms. Information collected from feedback forms contribute to the issues, observations, recommendations, and corrective actions in the AAR / IP.

**For further guidance on the evaluation process, please refer to the section titled ‘Observing and Evaluating the Exercise’ in the Facilitator and Evaluator Handbook.**

After completing the exercise, instruct the evaluators / data collectors to consolidate the data collected during the exercise and transform it into narratives, or exercise write-ups, which address the course of exercise play, demonstrated strengths, and areas for improvement. A template for an exercise write-up (and analysis of the identified issues) is provided in Appendix B of the Facilitator and Evaluator Handbook.

**For more information on writing up your recommendations, please refer to the section titled ‘Identify Root Causes and Develop Recommendations’ in the Facilitator and Evaluator Handbook.**

## Step 12: Draft After-Action Report / Improvement Plan

**(Task should be accomplished within three to four weeks after the exercise.)**

The end goal of the exercise is to produce an AAR / IP with recommendations for improving preparedness capabilities for your organization. The IP will provide timelines for improvement recommendation implementation and assignment to responsible parties. This plan should be an ongoing effort by your organization. For your reference, there is an AAR / IP template provided.

**For more information on the AAR / IP process and recommendations, please refer to the section titled ‘After-Action Report / Improvement Plan’ in the Facilitator and Evaluator Handbook.**

The planning team member(s) identified at the MPM to lead the after-action process should collect the notes and exercise write-ups and transform them into a draft AAR / IP. For assistance in doing this, please refer to the Facilitator Evaluator Handbook and the AAR / IP template. After drafting the AAR / IP, the documents should be circulated to the planning team for review and comment. Distributing these documents for review prior to the meeting helps to ensure that all attendees are familiar with the content; are prepared to discuss exercise results, identified areas for improvement and corrective actions; and have ample opportunity to comment and work toward consensus. The planning team lead on the AAR / IP should then adjudicate the comments and print copies for the planning team to review at the After-Action Meeting.

## Step 13: After-Action Meeting

**(Task should be accomplished five to six weeks following the exercise.)**

The After-Action Meeting (AAM) serves as the forum to review the draft AAR and the draft IP. During the AAM, participants should seek to reach final consensus on strengths and areas for improvement, as well as revise and gain consensus on draft corrective actions. Additionally, as appropriate, AAM participants should develop concrete deadlines for implementation of corrective actions and identify specific corrective action owners / assignees. Participant organizations are responsible for developing implementation processes and timelines, and keeping appropriate parties informed of the implementation status. It is recommended that the planning team members who drafted the AAR / IP walk through the document and encourage the planning team as a whole to discuss and finalize each item. The planning team should also discuss any sensitivities in the document and determine how the document will be distributed.

## Step 14: Finalize and Distribute the AAR / IP

**(Task should be accomplished within two weeks following the AAM.)**

Once any final modifications to the AAR / IP determined during the AAM have been made, the document should be finalized and circulated to the planning team. The AAR / IP is then considered final, and may be distributed to exercise planners, participants, and other preparedness stakeholders as appropriate and in accordance with the plan determined upon in the AAM.

This page is intentionally left blank.

## APPENDIX A: ADAPTING TTX DOCUMENTS

The following components of the exercise documentation should be reviewed and adapted during the exercise planning process. In sections where there are options, it is pertinent you choose an option and/or provide details relevant to your organization and its needs, as necessary. All **yellow highlighted** / **red font** fields included in the exercise documents should be populated with relevant information and the highlighting should be removed before the conduct of the exercise.

Please note, if modifications are made to any of the exercise documents, the page numbers below will be altered.

### Core Capabilities

Choose core capabilities to evaluate during your exercise. A full list is provided in Appendix A of the Facilitator and Evaluator Handbook and Appendix B of the AAR / IP. Not all capabilities may be applicable to every organization. Recommended core capabilities are listed below, but organizations should select the most appropriate from the full list.

- Intelligence and Information Sharing
- Operational Communications
- Operational Coordination
- Physical Protective Measures
- Planning
- Public Information and Warning
- Risk Management for Protection Programs and Activities

Once the core capabilities have been selected, make the appropriate modifications, in the following documents:

- SitMan
- Exercise Brief Slide Deck
- AAR / IP

For additional information and insight into core capabilities, please reference Appendix A of the Facilitator and Evaluator Handbook.

### Exercise Objectives

Listed below are sample objectives. The SitMan that you select will include proposed objectives specific to the scope and scenario of the exercise. The EPT and/or facilitator may choose to cover some or all of the proposed objectives and/or draft new objectives, as necessary. Sample objectives are listed below:

1. Review intelligence and information sharing and dissemination processes in relation to a credible threat to domestic critical infrastructure owners / operators.
2. Assess information sharing capabilities with the public; private sector partners; and Federal, State, local, tribal, and territorial government departments and agencies; in accordance with applicable plans and procedures.
3. Discuss private sector stakeholders' emergency preparedness plans and response procedures to a multi-stage incident and the coordination of activities under the National Incident Management System (NIMS) with local, State, and Federal agencies.
4. Review participating organizations' business continuity plans or continuity of operations plans in the aftermath of a violent attack on critical infrastructure.

Once the objectives have been finalized, make the appropriate modifications, if necessary, in the following documents:

- SitMan
- Exercise Brief Slide Deck
- AAR / IP

If no new objectives were drafted, delete “[Insert additional exercise objectives as necessary]” in the following documents where indicated by **yellow highlighted** / **red font** fields:

- SitMan
- Exercise Brief Slide Deck
- AAR / IP

## Scenario

There are customization options within the scenario to help further tailor the scenario to your organization. Where customization is needed in the scenario, text is **yellow highlighted** in the SitMan and marked in **red font** in the Exercise Brief Slide Deck. Ensure all changes made to the scenario match in the SitMan and Exercise Brief Slide Deck. Remove all **yellow highlighted** / **red font** upon completion of customization.

## Discussion Questions

As referenced in Step 6, the discussion questions provided in the SitMan are suggested general subjects you may wish to address as the discussion progresses. These questions are not meant to constitute a definitive list of concerns to be addressed. You should add, delete, or modify any of the discussion questions to most effectively address the objectives of your exercise and the needs of your organization. The final questions should be based upon the objectives for the exercise.

Once question sets are finalized, make the appropriate modifications in the following documents:

- SitMan
- Exercise Brief Slide Deck

## Agenda

Each exercise included in the CTEP is recommended to last approximately four hours. The actual duration of the entire exercise and each individual module is scalable to the needs of your organization and to meet your exercise's objectives. Modify the agenda to meet the needs of your exercise as necessary. A recommended agenda is listed below:

- |  |                         |
|--|-------------------------|
| • Registration                                   | 8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.   |
| • Welcome, Introduction, and Player Briefing     | 8:30 a.m. – 8:50 a.m.   |
| • Module One: Threat                             | 8:50 a.m. – 9:50 a.m.   |
| • Break (at facilitator discretion)              | 9:50 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.  |
| • Module Two: Incident and Aftermath             | 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. |
| • Break (at facilitator discretion)              | 11:00 a.m. – 11:10 a.m. |
| • Module Three: Business Continuity and Recovery | 11:10 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. |
| • Hotwash  | 12:00 p.m. – 12:20 p.m. |
| • Closing Comments                               | 12:20 p.m. – 12:30 p.m. |
| • Facilitator / Evaluator Debrief                | 12:30 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.  |

Note that the facilitator(s) and any evaluators / data collectors should meet one hour before the exercise for a briefing on the exercise. Once the agenda has been determined, make the appropriate modifications in the following documents:

- SitMan
- Exercise Brief Slide Deck

## Situation Manual

The Situation Manual (SitMan) is adaptable to fit the needs of your organization. Add input, photographs, and maps as necessary.

### Fill in the name of the sponsoring organizations

- SitMan
- AAR / IP

## Exercise Brief Slide Deck

The Exercise Brief Slide Deck is a PowerPoint Presentation companion to the SitMan and it reflects the same information detailed within. It is recommended that only the primary questions are included on the appropriate slides, and not all sub-questions.

### Fill in the name and title of the individual(s) who will conduct the opening remarks

- Exercise Brief slide deck, slide 3

**List the participating organizations**

- Exercise Brief slide deck, slide 5

**List the materials for the TTX**

- Exercise Brief slide deck, slide 6

**Fill in the name and title of the individual(s) who will conduct the closing remarks**

- Exercise Brief slide deck, second to last slide

**Invitation Letter**

- Customize all yellow highlighted sections of the invitation letter for your exercise and remove yellow highlighted.

**AAR / IP**

The AAR / IP template contains guidance within the template on how to develop the AAR / IP.

- Customize all yellow highlighted sections of the AAR / IP for your exercise and remove yellow highlighted.

## APPENDIX B: TTX DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

### C&O Meeting

C&O Meeting	Assigned To	Due	Completed	Status	Notes
<b>Preparation</b>					
Receive initial guidance					
Schedule teleconference					
Develop Concept Paper					
Develop project timeline					
Reserve / Coordinate / Confirm facility					
Develop Planning Team Roster					
Develop invitation with webinar guidance (if using webinars)					
Develop agenda					
Develop slides					
Develop read-ahead packet (if needed)					
Draft proposed exercise timeline					
Execute internal review of documents					
<b>Review &amp; Approval</b>					
Submit Concept Paper & acquire approval					
Submit participant listing for review					
Submit documents for review					
Submit invitation for review					
<b>Final Preparation</b>					
Finalize Planning Team Roster					
Distribute invitation					
Distribute read-ahead packet / documents (if necessary)					
Finalize presentation					
Make copies of presentation					
Finalize sign-in sheets					
Make copies of sign-in sheets					
Arrange for A/V and IT support (if applicable)					
Reserve / confirm conference bridge (if applicable)					
Coordinate travel instructions / details and logistics issues					
Designate roles for the Exercise Team (facilitator, note taker, mic runner, etc.)					



C&O Meeting	Assigned To	Due	Completed	Status	Notes
Save all documentation to shared drive					
Upload exercise documentation to HSIN					
<b>Execution and Transition to Next Phase</b>					
Arrival and set-up					
Designate roles for the Exercise Team (facilitator, note taker, mic runner, etc.)					
Conduct registration					
Provide copies of presentation					
Conduct meeting					
Take notes					
Revise exercise timeline					
Develop and confirm next steps					
Develop minutes and submit for review					
Distribute minutes					
Revise Concept Paper and distribute					
Distribute Initial Invites					
Revise fact sheet					
<b>Additional Assignments</b>					

## IPM

IPM	Assigned To	Due	Completed	Status	Notes
<b>Preparation</b>					
Reserve / Coordinate / Confirm facility					
Schedule teleconference					
Develop Planning Team Roster					
Develop invitation					
Develop slides					
Develop read-ahead packet (if needed)					
Execute internal review of documents					
<b>Review &amp; Approval</b>					
Submit participant listing for review					
Submit documents for review					
Submit invitation for review and distribute					
<b>Final Preparation</b>					
Finalize Planning Team Roster					
Distribute invitation					
Distribute read-ahead packet (if applicable)					
Finalize presentation					
Make copies of presentation					
Finalize sign-in sheets					
Make copies of sign-in sheets					
Prepare name badges and tents					
Arrange for A/V and IT support					
Reserve / confirm conference bridge (if applicable)					
Coordinate travel instructions/details and logistics issues					
Designate roles for the Exercise Team (facilitator, note taker, mic runner, etc.)					
Save all documentation to shared drive					
<b>Execution and Transition to Next Phase</b>					
Arrival and set-up					
Conduct registration					
Provide copies of presentation					
Provide copies of draft exercise documents					
Conduct meeting					
Take notes					
Develop minutes					
Distribute minutes					
Revise exercise timeline					



IPM	Assigned To	Due	Completed	Status	Notes
Update Fact Sheet					
Create videos (if necessary)					
<b>Additional Assignments</b>					

## C&O/IPM Combined

C&O/IPM Combined	Assigned To	Due	Completed	Status	Notes
<b>Preparation</b>					
Receive initial guidance					
Schedule teleconference					
Develop Concept Paper					
Develop project timeline					
Reserve / Coordinate / Confirm facility					
Develop Planning Team Roster					
Develop invitation with webinar guidance (if applicable)					
Develop agenda					
Develop slides					
Develop read-ahead packet (if needed)					
Draft proposed exercise timeline					
Execute internal review of documents					
<b>Review &amp; Approval</b>					
Submit Concept Paper & acquire approval					
Submit participant listing for review					
Submit documents for review					
Submit invitation for review					
<b>Final Preparation</b>					
Finalize Planning Team Roster					
Distribute invitation					
Distribute read-ahead packet / documents					
Finalize presentation					
Make copies of presentation					
Finalize sign-in sheets					
Make copies of sign-in sheets					
Arrange for A/V and IT support					
Reserve / confirm conference bridge (if applicable)					
Coordinate travel instructions / details and logistics issues					
Designate roles for the Exercise Team (facilitator, note taker, mic runner, etc.)					
Save all documentation to shared drive					
<b>Execution and Transition to Next Phase</b>					
Arrival and set-up					
Conduct registration					
Provide copies of presentation					
Conduct meeting					



C&O/IPM Combined	Assigned To	Due	Completed	Status	Notes
Take notes					
Revise exercise timeline					
Develop next steps					
Develop minutes					
Distribute minutes					
Revise Concept Paper and distribute (if necessary)					
Save all documentation to shared drive					
Create videos (if necessary)					
Additional Assignments					

## MPM

MPM	Assigned To	Due	Completed	Status	Notes
<b>Preparation</b>					
Reserve / Coordinate / Confirm facility					
Schedule teleconference					
Develop Planning Team Roster					
Develop invitation					
Develop slides					
Develop read-ahead packet (if needed)					
Execute internal review of documents					
<b>Review &amp; Approval</b>					
Submit participant listing for review					
Submit documents for review					
Submit invitation for review					
<b>Final Preparation</b>					
Finalize Planning Team Roster					
Distribute invitation					
Distribute read-ahead packet (if applicable)					
Finalize presentation					
Make copies of presentation					
Finalize sign-in sheets					
Make copies of sign-in sheets					
Prepare name badges and tents					
Arrange for A/V and IT support					
Reserve/confirm conference bridge (if applicable)					
Coordinate travel instructions/details and logistics issues					
Designate roles for the Exercise Team (facilitator, note taker, mic runner, etc.)					
Save all documentation to shared drive					
<b>Execution and Transition to Next Phase</b>					
Arrival and set-up					
Conduct registration					
Provide copies of presentation					
Provide copies of draft exercise documents					
Conduct meeting					
Take notes					
Revise exercise timeline					
Develop minutes					
Distribute minutes					



MPM	Assigned To	Due	Completed	Status	Notes
Create videos (if necessary)					
Additional Assignments					

## FPM

FPM	Assigned To	Due	Completed	Status	Notes
<b>Preparation</b>					
Reserve / Coordinate / Confirm facility					
Schedule teleconference					
Develop Planning Team Roster					
Develop invitation					
Develop slides					
Submit invitation for edit					
Develop read-ahead packet (if needed)					
Review videos and submit for approval (if applicable)					
Execute internal review of documents					
<b>Review &amp; Approval</b>					
Submit participant listing for review					
Submit documents for review					
Submit invitation for review					
Receive approval for videos (if necessary)					
<b>Final Preparation</b>					
Finalize Planning Team Roster					
Distribute invitation					
Distribute read-ahead packet (if applicable)					
Finalize presentation					
Make copies of presentation					
Finalize sign-in sheets					
Make copies of sign-in sheets					
Prepare name badges and tents					
Arrange for A/V and IT support					
Reserve/confirm conference bridge (if applicable)					
Coordinate travel instructions/details and logistics issues					
Designate roles for the Exercise Team (facilitator, note taker, mic runner, etc.)					
Save all documentation to shared drive					
<b>Execution and Transition to Next Phase</b>					
Arrival and set-up					
Conduct registration					
Provide copies of presentation					
Provide copies of draft exercise documents					



FPM	Assigned To	Due	Completed	Status	Notes
Conduct meeting					
Take notes					
Conduct Tabletop Exercise site visit(s)					
Develop minutes					
Distribute minutes					
Upload relevant documents to shared drive					
Additional Assignments					

## Conduct

TTX Conduct	Assigned To	Due	Completed	Status	Notes
<b>Preparation</b>					
Determine facility requirements					
Develop Exercise Participant List					
Develop invitation					
Confirm facility reservation					
Develop event slides					
Develop final SitMan (Reference materials, Bulletins, Acronyms, Photos)					
Develop Participant Feedback Form					
Develop read-ahead packet					
<b>Review &amp; Approval</b>					
Submit exercise documents for review					
Submit exercise participant roster for review					
Receive approval for all exercise documentation					
Submit invitation for review					
<b>Final Preparation</b>					
Finalize Exercise Participant list					
Distribute invitation					
Finalize presentation					
Verify Facility Support (A/V, IT, etc.)					
Reserve / confirm conference bridge (if applicable)					
Final Revision to Documents					
Documents printed or submitted to printer					
Consolidate Final Attendance Roster					
Finalize sign-in sheets					
Make copies of sign-in sheets					
Save all documentation to shared drive					
Pick-Up materials from Printer					
Prepare name badges and tents					
Finalize Seating Chart					
Conduct Leadership Exercise Pre-Brief					
Coordinate travel instructions/details and logistics issues					
Exercise Team Walkthrough					
<b>Execution and Transition to Next Phase</b>					
Exercise Team Arrive at facility					
Final Room Set Up					
Distribute exercise materials					
Conduct registration					



TTX Conduct	Assigned To	Due	Completed	Status	Notes
Designate roles for the Exercise Team (facilitator, note taker, mic runner, etc.)					
Exercise personnel staged					
STARTEX					
Note Taking					
Picture Taking					
ENDEX					
Conduct Hot Wash					
Collect feedback forms					
Send Thank you to Participants					
Consolidate notes and feedback for development of AAR					
Upload relevant documents to shared drive					
<b>Additional Assignments</b>					

## AAM

AAM	Assigned To	Due	Completed	Status	Notes
<b>Preparation</b>					
Reserve / Coordinate / Confirm facility					
Develop Meeting Participant List					
Develop invitation					
Develop agenda					
Develop draft AAM documents					
Develop sign-in sheet					
Complete 1st Draft AAR/IP					
Execute internal review of documents					
<b>Review &amp; Approval</b>					
Submit participant listing for review					
Submit 1st Draft AAR / IP for review					
Submit invitation for review					
<b>Final Preparation</b>					
Finalize Meeting Participant List					
Distribute invitation					
Complete 2nd Draft AAR / IP					
Distribute read-ahead packet					
Finalize agenda					
Make copies of agenda					
Make copies of draft AAR					
Coordinate A/V and IT support					
Reserve / confirm conference bridge (if applicable)					
Coordinate travel instructions/details and logistics issues					
Finalize sign-in sheets					
Make copies of sign-in sheets					
Prepare name badges and tents					
Save all documentation to shared drive					
<b>Execution and Transition to Next Phase</b>					
Arrival and set-up					
Designate roles for the Exercise Team (facilitator, note taker, mic runner, etc.)					
Conduct registration					
Provide copies of agenda					
Provide copies of presentation and draft AAR					
Provide copies of reference material (or list)					
Conduct AAM					
Take notes during AAM					
Develop meeting summary					



AAM	Assigned To	Due	Completed	Status	Notes
Submit Draft meeting summary for review					
Finalize AAM meeting summary with stakeholder input					
Distribute Final Draft of meeting summary					
Complete Final Draft AAR / IP					
Submit Final Draft AAR / IP for review					
Complete Final AAR / IP					
Submit AAR/IP for Signature					
<b>Additional Assignments</b>					

## APPENDIX C: REFERENCE LIST

### U.S. Department of Homeland Security Resources, Tools, and Programs

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency strives to develop meaningful partnerships between the public and private sectors to ensure the protection of the Nation's critical infrastructure. These essential partnerships are the driving force behind the concept and development of all CTEP materials.

The references materials detailed in this appendix form a comprehensive list of resources, tools, and programs supported by DHS for critical infrastructure partners. Some of these reference documents are specifically referenced in the SitMan and should be handed out to participants during the exercise.

#### Tools

##### Active Shooter

- [Active Shooter Resources and Training](#)
- [NCTC First Responder Toolbox](#)
- [Options for Consideration Active Shooter Preparedness Video](#)
- [Pathway to Violence Video](#)

##### Insider Threat

- [Ensuring Building Security \(NPPD / FPS\)](#)
- [Insider Threat Mitigation Web Site](#)
- [Online Training: FEMA Emergency Management Institute Independent Study Course](#)
- [Understanding the Insider Threat Video and Trailer](#)
- [Violence in the Federal Workplace: A Guide for Prevention and Response 2019](#)

#### CISA Architecture

- [CISA's Cybersecurity Division](#)
- [CISA's Emergency Communications Division](#)
- [CISA's Federal Protective Service](#)
- [CISA's Infrastructure Security Division](#)
  - [Infrastructure Information Collection Division \(IICD\)](#)

- [National Infrastructure Coordinating Center \(NICC\)](#)
- [Protective Security Coordination Division \(PSCD\)](#)
  - [Office of Bombing Prevention \(OBP\)](#)
- [Stakeholder Engagement Division \(SED\) \[formerly Sector Outreach and Programs Division \(SOPD\)\]](#)
- [CISA's National Risk Management Center](#)

## **Factsheets**

- [Fact Sheet: CFATS Detect and Delay](#)
- [Fact Sheet: Risk-Based Performance Standard 8 – Cyber](#)
- [Fact Sheet: Risk-Based Performance Standards 12\(iv\) – Screening for Terrorist Ties](#)
- [Fact Sheet: Risk-Based Performance Standards 15 and 16 – Reporting Significant Security Incidents](#)
- [Government Emergency Telecommunications Services \(GETS\) Fact Sheet](#)
- [Homeland Security Information Network - Critical Infrastructure \(HSIN-CI\) Fact Sheet](#)
- [If You See Something, Say Something - Information and Public Display Materials Fact Sheet](#)
- [Insider Threat Fact Sheet](#)
- [National Terrorism Advisory System \(NTAS\) Public Guide, April 2011](#)
- [Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative \(NSI\) Fact Sheet](#)
- [NCCIC Combating Insider Threat Fact Sheet](#)
- [Pathway to Violence Fact Sheet](#)
- [Protective Security Advisor \(PSA\) Program Fact Sheet](#)
- [Technical Resource for Incident Prevention \(TRIPWire\) Fact Sheet](#)
- [Wireless Priority Service \(WPS\) Fact Sheet](#)

## **Doctrine and Training**

- [CISA Security of Soft Targets and Crowded Places Resource Guide](#)
- [Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\) – Emergency Management Institute](#)
  - [Federal Emergency Management Agency \(FEMA\) Independent Study Program](#)
  - [Security and Awareness Courses](#)
- [Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program \(HSEEP\)](#)

- [Infrastructure Visualization Platform \(IVP\) \(formerly Computer Based Assessment Tool \(CBAT\)\)](#)
- [Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Training Courses](#)
- [National Infrastructure Protection Plan \(NIPP\) Overview](#)
- [National Preparedness Goal \(NPG\), Second Edition, September 2015](#)
- [National Response Framework \(NRF\), Third Edition, June 2016](#)

## **Other Sources**

- [DHS Response Checklist for Suspicious Packages and Mail](#)
- [Joint Terrorism Task Force \(JTTF\)](#)
- [SchoolSafety.gov](#)
- [Security and Resiliency Guide: Counter-IED Concepts, Common Goals, and Available Assistance](#)

This page is intentionally left blank.

## APPENDIX D: ACRONYM LIST

Acronym	Definition
<b>AAM</b>	After-Action Meeting
<b>AAR / IP</b>	After-Action Report / Improvement Plan
<b>C&amp;O</b>	Concept and Objectives Meeting
<b>CISA</b>	Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency
<b>CTEP</b>	CISA Tabletop Exercise Package
<b>DHS</b>	Department of Homeland Security
<b>EPT</b>	Exercise Planning Team
<b>FEMA</b>	Federal Emergency Management Agency
<b>FPM</b>	Final Planning Meeting
<b>HSEEP</b>	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
<b>IPM</b>	Initial Planning Meeting
<b>MPM</b>	Midterm Planning Meeting
<b>NIMS</b>	National Incident Management System
<b>PSA</b>	Protective Security Advisor
<b>SitMan</b>	Situation Manual
<b>SME</b>	Subject Matter Expert
<b>TTX</b>	Tabletop Exercise

