

Disaster Behavioral Health Psychological First Aid Drill

Situation Manual

July 9, 2015

This Situation Manual (SitMan) 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 SitMan.

This activity is part of a coordinated effort on behalf of the U.S. Federal Government and the State of Nebraska under the direction of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services Division of Public Health, and Supported by Grant No. 5U90TP000533 under a sub-grant from the Department of Health and Human Services and Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Name	Disaster Behavioral Health Psychological First Aid Drill	
Exercise Dates	July 9, 2015	
Scope	This is a two part exercise consisting of a discussion and review of activation and coordination of Behavioral Health Disaster Response and a practical application of Psychological First Aid (PFA) skills, planned for 4 hours at the Hilton Hotel, 1001 Cass Street, Omaha, NE. Exercise play is limited to the use of established PFA techniques and practices.	
Mission Area(s)	Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and/or Recovery	
Core Capabilities	Planning, Operational Coordination, Intelligence and Information Sharing, Situational Assessment,	
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide an opportunity for Behavioral Health responders to review Psychological First Aid procedures and processes. 2. Provide an opportunity for Behavioral Health responders to exercise Psychological First Aid Skills. 3. Provide an opportunity for Behavioral Health responders to review and discuss behavioral health needs assessment and ICS integration procedures. 	
Threat or Hazard	Explosion of unknown origin	
Scenario	An explosion occurs on the Campus of a local State Institution of Higher Learning. There are numerous injuries to bystanders (Students, Faculty and visitors) ranging from minor to fatal. There are many more persons that appear to be physically uninjured yet suffering emotional or psychological trauma.	
Sponsor	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services	
Participating Organizations	University of Nebraska Lincoln Public Policy Center, Nebraska Emergency Management Agency, Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, Nebraska Behavioral Health Regions	
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GENERAL INFORMATION

Exercise Objectives and Core Capabilities

The following exercise objectives in Table 1 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
Determine if the current Operating Guidelines and Plans to be employed by BHERT and Local Volunteers are in need of revision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current policies and procedures • Ensure plans and polices meet the needs of all teams and communities 	Planning
Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of the mission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop cohesive teams • Determine leadership • Organize and delegate • Utilize chain of command for communications 	Operational Coordination
Ensure the dissemination of timely, accurate, and actionable information both up and down the chain of command as appropriate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any incident details that were previously undisclosed to Command • Information as appropriate and allowed to victims • Operational information as needed by teams 	Intelligence and Information Sharing
Provide decision makers with decision-relevant information regarding the status of the response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and distribute reports as directed • Communicate with the IMT • Provide information updates as directed 	Situational Assessment

Table 1. Exercise Objectives and Associated Core Capabilities

Participant Roles and Responsibilities

The term *participant* encompasses many groups of people, not just those playing in the exercise. Groups of participants involved in the exercise, and their respective roles and responsibilities, are as follows:

- **Players.** Players are personnel who have an active role in discussing or performing their regular roles and responsibilities during the exercise. Players discuss or initiate actions in response to the simulated emergency.
- **Observers.** Observers do not directly participate in the exercise. However, they may support the development of player responses to the situation during the discussion by asking relevant questions or providing subject matter expertise.
- **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 exercise.
- **Evaluators.** Evaluators 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.

Exercise Structure

This exercise will be a multimedia, facilitated exercise. Players will participate in the following 3 modules:

- Module 1: Review: Psychological First Aid
- Module 2: Drill: Psychological First Aid Skills Practice
- Module 2: Discussion: BHERT Activation & Coordination with Local/State Agencies

For this exercise, the players will be formed into multiple (6) field teams and simulate dispersal to various family and survivor assistance sites as required.

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 prevention/protection/mitigation/response/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.

Exercise Evaluation

Players will be asked to complete two separate Psychological First Aid knowledge and confidence surveys during this exercise.

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: PFA REVIEW

July 9, 2015, Thursday: 1315 hrs

This will be a review of current Psychological First Aid skills and techniques in use by the Behavioral Health Community.

Key Issues

- Working as a Team
- Needs Assessment
- Psychological First Aid in the Field
- Effective Communication
- De-escalation
- Demobilization

Questions

Based on the information provided, participate in the discussion concerning the issues raised in Module 1.

Identify any critical issues, decisions, requirements, or questions that should be addressed at this time.

MODULE 2: DRILL

Scenario

September 5, 2015, Saturday: 1300 hrs

On the campus of a local State institution of higher learning, there were a series of explosions.

Areas impacted were the student union area, two main campus dormitories and an area near the fraternity/sorority housing. The explosions occurred mid-day following a home football game. There are numerous fatalities from the attack (15 - 20) and many more injured/wounded (30 - 50). First responders are actively investigating the cause of the explosions.

Incident Command has been established at the Emergency Operations Center within the School Police Department. The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) has been activated. The Local Emergency Operations Center (LEOC) has been activated.

As persons are evacuated and moved to temporary triage and treatment locations, numerous persons with no physical injuries are exhibiting signs of psychological stress, debilitating fear and shock.

Behavioral Health resources have been requested by the Incident Commander (IC). That request was then sent to the SEOC and given to The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (NDHHS) Emergency Support Function Coordinator (ESFC #8), and routed to the NDHHS Division of Behavioral Health Director. The request is for immediate deployment of BHERT for an undetermined length of time.

Key Issues

- The number of affected persons in and around the campus area.
- The number of team members needed for the duration of the activation.
- Needed equipment and supplies by the team.
- Safe locations for treatment.

Questions

Based on the information provided, participate in the drill utilizing established PFA skills and techniques concerning the issues raised in Module 2, identify any critical issues, decisions, requirements, or questions that should be addressed at this time.

MODULE 3: DISCUSSION

July 9, 2015, Thursday: 1300 hrs

This discussion will review the current plans, policies, procedures and guidelines for the activation and deployment of the Behavioral Health Emergency Response Team (BHERT).

Key Issues

- Integration into ICS Structure
- Deployment expectations
 - Time lines
 - Duties
- Any proposed changes to current procedures

Questions

Participate in the discussion concerning the issues raised by Module 2, identify any critical issues, decisions, requirements, or questions that should be addressed at this time.

The following questions are provided as suggested 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.

All Participants

1. How are your teams activated and mobilized?
2. How do your teams integrate into the existing Incident Command System?
 - a. Under which sections of the ICS could/would your teams organize?
 - b. To whom would your teams share and report information?
3. What objectives would your team establish for operational periods of the incident?
 - a. What information would you use from your experience in Module 2 to develop these objectives?
 - b. What worked well in serving behavioral health needs after an incident, and what changes would you suggest?

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 SitMan.

Time	Activity
July 9, 2015	
1230 - 1300	Registration and badging / Pre-exercise survey
1300 - 1315	Welcome and Opening Remarks
1315 - 1415	Psychological First Aid Review
1415 - 1430	Scenario Briefing
1430 - 1445	Break
1445 - 1600	Psychological First Aid Skills Practice
1600 - 1615	Break
1615 - 1645	Groups Convene and Report Out
1630 - 1645	After Action / Hot Wash / Post-exercise survey
1645 - 1700	Wrap up & Closing Remarks

APPENDIX B: EXERCISE PARTICIPANTS

Participating Organizations	
State	
	University of Nebraska Public Policy Center
	Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
	Nebraska Department of Correctional Services
	Nebraska Behavioral Health Regional Teams

APPENDIX C: RELEVANT PLANS

1. Nebraska Behavioral Health All-Hazards Disaster Response and Recovery Plan.
2. Nebraska Behavioral Health Emergency Response Team Standard Operating Guidelines.

APPENDIX D: ACRONYMS

Acronym	Term
HSEEP	Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
SitMan	Situation Manual
SME	Subject Matter Expert
TTX	Tabletop Exercise
NSP	Nebraska State Patrol
NDHHS	Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services
SFM	Nebraska Fire Marshal
NEMA	Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
BHERT	Behavioral Health Emergency Response Team
SERT	State Emergency Response Team
PFA	Psychological First Aid