EXERCISE DESIGN 101
BEFORE YOU BEGIN

• Why are you conducting the exercise (legislation, regular cycle, follow-up exercise, directive from your leadership, real incidents, etc.).
• Who needs to be involved in the planning?
• Who & what are you testing?
• Consider the findings of your HRVA, historical data, new threats such as climate change, etc. to create the scenario.
• Have the support of your organization’s leadership (senior and any other leadership).
W-5

• Who - do you have the right people/agencies at the table?
• What - what are you testing & what type of exercise are you using?
• Where - where will the exercise take place?
• When - establish the date and time
• Why - why are you conducting the exercise?
GETTING THE BALL ROLLING

- Pull together an initial planning team (keep it fairly small to start – 6 to 10)
- Determine the exercise format (tabletop, functional, mock)
- Determine who and what you want to exercise
- Determine who else needs to be part of the planning group (depends on the type of scenario)
- Be realistic (base this on your industry, past incidents, etc.)
- Assign tasks to the planning team.
- Everyone needs to know their own plan.
- Create the scenario – “keep it real”.
- Plan for success.
Tasks for the bigger planning group:

- Observers (preferably from several participant agencies)
- Signage for the exercise
- Video & pictures
- Moulage
- Scenario setup
- Props
- Communications – media/public/parents
“GO-LIVE”

• Expect the unexpected and be prepared for stuff to go south in a hurry.
• Keep a few injects in your back pocket in the event that the exercise goes flat.
• Ensure that everyone involved is aware of the “no duff” x 3 in the event a real incident occurs.
• Observers need to pay close attention to everyone involved and have the authority to shut down the exercise immediately.
THE DEBRIEF/HOT WASH

1. Ensure all participants are involved
2. It should be held immediately post exercise
3. Ensure the environment is “safe”
4. Discuss what went well and what fell short
5. Were the goals and objectives met?
6. Was the plan followed (observer & discussion point)?
7. Talk about what can be improved.
8. Do not belittle anyone.
COMMON MISTAKES

1. The exercise is too complex
2. The exercise is unrealistic
3. No goals or objectives are defined
4. Participants are setup to fail
5. Planning is too rushed, good planning takes time.
POSITIVE OUTCOMES

1. Identifies short comings so the plans can be improved.
2. Participants are better prepared for real incidents
3. Builds better relationships
4. Builds trust
5. Increase confidence