



HEREFORD & WORCESTER  
**HWFR**  
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

## Exercise Planning Guidance

### Introduction

In alignment with the Service's Response Strategy and underpinned by the foundational principles of **Availability**, **Competence**, and **Intel**, this guidance document is intended to provide operational units with strategic direction for the planning and execution of Station and District-level exercises.

### Approach

All operational units are required to either organise, conduct, or participate in exercises in accordance with their designated allocations outlined below. Watch Commanders shall be accountable for the scheduling, planning, and coordination of these exercises, ensuring where applicable that the objectives align with the principles set out in the **Cross-Border Exercise Strategy**. Prior to the commencement of any exercise, a new digital NE1 form must be completed, capturing all relevant details.

### Allocation

The aim is for each operational unit (WT or On-Call) to organise and conduct their allocated exercises as per the following:

| UNIT      | ORGANISE & CONDUCT | ATTEND       |
|-----------|--------------------|--------------|
| WHOLETIME | 1                  | Minimum of 2 |
| ON-CALL * | 1                  | Minimum of 1 |

All units are required to support and attend exercises as required.

\*On-Call units may jointly plan an exercise with neighbouring stations or station with the relevant specialism (e.g. animal rescue) where appropriate.

### Exercise Format

### Station Exercises:

Should include a multi-agency, and/or over the border attendance and aim to attract 2 to 4 appliances.

### District Exercises:

Should include a multi-agency, and/or over the border attendance and aim to attract 8 to 10 appliances.

### Service Exercises:

Must include a multi-agency, and over the border attendance and all resources will be determined to meet the exercise requirements.

## **Objectives**

The main objectives of exercises are to practice skills, enhance knowledge of operational procedures and provide Firefighters with the right level of information to deal with foreseeable risks. Exercises should be planned to meet the requirements of the Service Response Strategy and District objectives to improve operational effectiveness.

All exercises must have clear objectives set and the format should incorporate one or more of the following areas:

- A designated NOG based scenario
- A designated theme i.e. BA/WATER/HAZMAT/RTC/NATIONAL RISK
- An identified URN Intel based Service risk site
- Any other new or emerging risk deemed appropriate, e.g. - new equipment/new procedures/infrastructure risk, themes identified through the debriefing process
- Any risks identified within the CRMP

The lead organiser shall liaise with all attending units to determine any specific requirements or development activity may need to be considered and included, such as:

- Consolidation and support for Firefighter / JO development
- Incident Command training opportunities
- AIM – incident monitoring to support new and development Commanders
- Multi agency interoperability (JESIP) Police/Ambulance/HART/Highways/Over boarder FRS

Where possible, and to gain maximum activity and output, elements within the exercise scenario should include:

- Incident Command System
- Trauma /Casualty Care/TST.
- JESIP / Multi agency interoperability
- Communications

These elements should link directly into the National Occupational Standards (NOS) and specifically the training specification within the National Operational Guidance (NOG) around control measures of local knowledge and incident orientation.

## Planning & Organising

Each unit should plan and attend exercises as per their allocation. Exercises will need to be spread across the training year April to March.

Due to the geography of Districts and stations, and to assist maintaining fire cover during exercises, North & South Districts will amalgamate participation. However, should an exercise theme be focussed on special appliances, units from West District may also amalgamate across the Service area.

The Lead organiser must identify the aims and objectives in the NE1 form and ensure that it is completed at least 6 weeks prior to the date of the exercise. NE1 forms will be forwarded to the relevant attendees, OCSO and Flexi Duty Officers by the respective District Administrator. NE1 forms will be stored centrally on SharePoint by the Exercise Planning Team.

When initially considering the exercise, the following factors should be taken into consideration:

- Venue – availability/safety
- Date and Time
- Identification of Aims and Objectives
- Scenario – clearly set out the situation in which the participants will find themselves
- Roles & responsibilities for units and directing staff
- Internal Assistance – BAI/SRTI/RTCI/assessors/Officers
- External assistance – casualties/on-site staff/other agencies
- Completion of digital NE1 form
- Risk assessment – specific to activity
- Off-site risk assessment
- Completion of Admin 24 Indemnity form
- Specific development needs
- Additional resources
- Appliance availability bookings prior to exercise
- Appliance availability during exercise

## Significant Delay essential training (SDET)

The SDET will only be for safety critical courses or any other absolute risk critical training essential to a specific specialism, whereby competence would be seriously affected should the training not be undertaken, such as safety critical refreshers put out by Training Centre. The delay for these courses will be for 1 hour (classed as significant).

The delay for **exercises** will be as follows.

- For station exercises, all appliances will be placed on a 15 min delay and Fire control will be informed of this on the day of the exercise subject to crewing.
- For those exercises that require an increased level of preparation and support from other agencies or from special appliances committed to the exercise above a 15 min delay, the SDET of 1 hour can be applied to those resources for the duration of the exercise. (i.e. boat exercises committed to the risk area.)
- For any exercises that clash with safety critical courses, Training Centre will confer with the organiser to rearrange the exercise for a different date.

## Debriefing

The debrief process **must** be carried out in accordance the Operational Learning and Debriefing – Local Service Procedure (LSP).

Upon completion of the exercise a hot debrief must be conducted allowing all agencies the ability to outline potential learning, and a debrief completed. External agencies will be required to complete a debrief in their own Service which is to be forwarded to the Operational Policy Department.

When the exercise involves multi agency partners JESIP principles need to be incorporated into the debrief.

Organising Managers and other attending Managers are reminded that exercise debriefs are an essential part of any learning event and must be carried out thoroughly. For District and Service exercises a formal structured debrief will be facilitated by the Ops Policy Team.

### Hot Debriefs

The Exercise coordinators must ensure that all necessary participants are included. If this is not possible, the Exercise Director must feedback any information to those unable to attend.

### Debrief recording

Exercise coordinators should remind all participants to complete a debrief form via the Service's debrief system. This includes exercises that crews from HWFRS attend over the border.

### Over Border attendance at HWFRS exercises

The exercise coordinator should request any neighbouring Service attending an HWFRS exercise to complete a debrief via their own Service's debrief system. This information will then be passed between relevant Operational Learning departments in both Services.

### External agencies

When the exercise involves multi agency partners the exercise coordinator is to ensure that external agencies are requested to submit a debrief via the current system for doing so.

## Post Exercise Report

The online Post Exercise Declaration Form must be submitted within 7 days of the exercise being completed which can be submitted via the Exercise Planning Portal on SharePoint.

This report provides a formal summary and evaluation of the exercise and includes:

- Exercise objectives and scope
- Scenario overview
- Performance assessment
- Debriefing

It is vitally important that as much information as possible is captured during the evaluation process as this will provide the analytics that

## Planning Flowchart

Plan date, time, scenario and format of exercise. Check CMS significant delay booking to ensure response availability. Consider rationale for exercise and which NOG scenario it relates to so that specific learning outcomes can be achieved



Access the Exercise Planning Portal via SharePoint. Complete and submit the online NE1 form. Once submitted, District Admin will email notification to all requested attendees of exercise and include details of date, time, RVP and scenario description



Ensure the following is completed where required:  
Full Safety Brief  
Risk Assessment for the exercise venue  
Indemnity Form (Admin 24)  
Volunteer Request Form (V11)



On the day of the exercise:  
Contact Fire Control to review fire cover arrangements  
Submit TERA and Pre/Post fitness declarations via the ROIL portal  
Hold a 'hot debrief' at the end of the exercise to capture learning outcomes



Post Exercise:  
Exercise Lead completes online Post Exercise Report Form via Exercise Planning Portal

Debriefs to be submitted by each attending appliance using ROIL  
External Agencies/Partners to complete their own debrief and share it with the HWFRS Ops  
Policy Dept