

City of Cupertino Office of Emergency Management Tabletop Exercise 1: 3/23/22

After-Action Report/Improvement Plan

The After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) aligns exercise objectives with preparedness doctrine to include the National Preparedness Goal and related frameworks and guidance. Exercise information required for preparedness reporting and trend analysis is included; users are encouraged to add additional sections as needed to support their own organizational needs.

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EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Name	West Cupertino Wildfire - Tabletop Discussion	
Exercise Date	Wednesday, March 23, 2022	
Time	0900 – 1100 hours	
Scope	This exercise is a drill, planned for two hours in the City of Cupertino and facilitated virtually via MS TEAMS. Virtual exercise play is limited to City boundaries.	
Link	MS Teams Meeting Link Or call in (audio only) +1 925-494-3352,,24890095# , Phone Conference ID: 248 900 95#	
Focus Area(s)	Response	
Capabilities	Operational Coordination, Public information and warning, Situational Assessment	
Objectives (supporting core capabilities)	- Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities. Begin public information coordination/strategy. (Operational Coordination) Deliver coordinated, prompt, reliable, and actionable information to the whole community through the use of clear, consistent, accessible, and culturally and linguistically appropriate methods to effectively relay information regarding any threat or hazard, as well as the actions being taken and the assistance being made available, as appropriate.. (Public information and warning) 2. Provide all decision makers with decision-relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard, any cascading effects, and the status of the response. (Situational Assessment)	
Threat/Hazard	Wildfire	
Scenario	A wildfire threatens communities in western Cupertino along the wildland-urban interface, prompting evacuations.	
Sponsor	The City of Cupertino	
City Departments Participating	- City Manager's Office - Office of Emergency Management & Cupertino Citizen Corps - Public Works - Parks and Recreation	- Administrative Service - Information Technology - Community Development
Points of Contact OEM	Tom Chin, Emergency Manager (408) 495-9234 Meredith Gerhardt, Emergency Management Analyst (925) 430-9431	

Name	West Cupertino Wildfire - Tabletop Discussion
Exercise Controllers	<i>Bob Cascone</i> , OEM Volunteer <i>Ken Foot</i> , , OEM Volunteer <i>Ken Ericksen</i> , , OEM Volunteer Coordinator

EXERCISE AND DISCUSSION OUTLINE

Introduction

- Review of tabletop (TTX) exercise as a np-fault learning framework
- Goal of discussion-based conversation
- TTX is part of a larger, continuous multi-year training and exercise program
- Exercise objectives align with National Response Framework core capabilities

Scenario

A vegetation fire breaks out in the wildland urban interface in west Cupertino. Zonehaven zone 17, fire establishes ICP and unified command forms with City OEM and Sheriff's Office.

EOC Objectives and Structure

EOC standing objectives

Protection of life, property, the environment, recovery

Exercise Objectives aligned with core capabilities

(1) establish and maintain unified command and EOC-ICP coordination; and, (2) to provide the EOC with relevant information about the response.

ICS Section Priorities Discussion Outcomes

EOC objectives focused on two of the thirty-two core capabilities in the National Response Frameworks, [operational coordination](#) and [situational assessment](#). Evaluation considered whether the exercise discussion referenced applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations and laws. Evaluation further considered whether the notional discussion identified appropriate priorities for City EOC sections, and whether these priorities would negatively impact other EOC activities.

- **The Management** section identified appropriate operational priorities in the first hour of activation. The priorities included identifying appropriate staffing of the EOC and coordination between the EOC and the ICP through the OEM representative in unified command. During the report-out, the management section was reminded by exercise controllers of the public information, safety and security functions of this section, as well as the section's role leading communications with elected officials.

- The **Logistics** section prioritized identifying immediate resource needs in the EOC including staffing and equipment. This section also suggested they might request an IAP from the field response to anticipate what future resources might be needed. The logistics section also said that they would begin working with the finance section to review purchasing policies and regulations.
- The **Planning** section identified information collection and display as their response priorities in the EOC. This section said that they would use collected information to understand the impact and extent of the incident, and to determine which EOC units and positions within the section would need to be staffed to adequately support the response. Exercise participants from other sections asked about how the City GIS dashboard might be used in the EOC, and asked about how additional incident-specific information like wind speed and air-quality might be shared using the same dashboard that is used for daily operations. Priorities identified during the exercise
 1. *Basic set up: Ensure that we can connect, project, and set up the information to disseminate to the field. Internet access, files, staffing.*
 2. *Start to gather information: Map out area and identify impacted properties, homes, critical facilities, population, schools. Understand the environment.*
 3. *Identify which units to activate and if staffing is sufficient. Request additional resources.*
 4. *People impacted: senior residents, vulnerable populations*
 5. *Focus on the Evacuation intelligence gathering and disseminate to EOC Team*
- The **Finance** section priorities included looking at available staff, identifying project tracking codes in existing HR infrastructure, communicating with EOC staff what forms are needed to track hours and determine availability of cash for immediate needs. Ideally, Finance section will have determined whether existing HR infrastructure for personnel management (time accounting) can be utilized effectively in an EOC activation.
- The **Operations section** prioritized damage assessment, and described not having immediate response priorities until they were allowed into the evacuated area to assess infrastructure. TTX facilitators reminded operations section of immediate needs in an evacuation; traffic control, establishment of shelters or temporary evacuation sites, food and water to support evacuees. This led to a discussion about the role of the operations chief managing operations section branches whose functions may be outside the scope of their daily work.

Participant Questions

- Would activation for an event like the scenario be virtual or in-person?

EOC has been remodeled to support virtual operations. Likely that there will be at least some EOC staff in person. Santa Clara County's alert and notification system, AlertSCC, indicates in notification whether your position is needed in-person or remotely. COVID response has proven some level of virtual response capability

- What is the role of the emergency manager at a field ICP in unified command?

Intention of City participation in unified command at field ICP is twofold: Representation of the city in decision-making structure of ICP to ensure response appropriately impacts city, and streamlining communication back to city. Cupertino EM in UC can also share City GIS information with the ICP, and be the point of contact for volunteer units with response resources that may be needed

- Will the GIS dashboard show additional layers of information relevant to a situation like a wildfire in an EOC activation?

Yes. Weather data and critical infrastructure information is available through City GIS dashboard. GIS team says that it will use the exercise to assess what information might be needed to add to GIS platform like air quality and weather feeds

- What additional roles does the management section have in an activation?

Guiding the ways elected officials engage with the response. Sharing critical public information with elected officials and pointing them toward a dashboard with all relevant SA information immediately an, roles of safety and security officers in EOC, JIS and PIO roles

- How and when to consider requesting additional resources, positions in a section?

People should not exhaust resources before asking for. All sections should anticipate needs for upcoming operational period and consider how to keep operations moving at current rate

- If organizations or companies have contracts with different City departments for regular daily operations, and/or are offering additional emergency resources, Which section makes contact with organizations/ companies offering resources?

Leveraging relationships with outside groups to share goods/ services that are needed operationally during a response is an operation function. Operations section tracks,

records and shares information about resources brought in to aid emergency operations from outside groups

ANALYSIS OF CORE CAPABILITIES

Aligning exercise objectives and core capabilities supports preparedness reporting and trend analysis. Table 1 includes the exercise objectives, aligned core capabilities, and performance ratings for each core capability as observed during the exercise and determined by the evaluation team.

This exercise involved a high-level discussion of sectional priorities and information needs in the first hour of an EOC activation. This first tabletop exercise of the 2022+ training and exercise program represented the first EOC discussion for most participants. Performance evaluation considers participation and the nature of engagement from exercise participants. The evaluation includes feedback from exercise controllers.

Objective (Core Capability)	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to be Performed (U)
Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities. Begin public information coordination/strategy (Capability: Operational Coordination)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)			
Provide all decision makers with decision-relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard, any cascading effects, and the status of the response. (Capability: Situational Assessment)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)			

Evaluation Considerations

Were targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities? Was the activity conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws?

SUMMARY OF CORE CAPABILITY PERFORMANCE

The following sections provide an overview of the performance related to each exercise objective and associated core capability, highlighting strengths and opportunities for improvement.

Objective 1

Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities. Begin public information coordination/strategy

Core Capability 1

Examples of operational coordination identified during the discussion section of the TTX are described in the strengths below. Operational coordination was described during the discussion among ICS sections in the EOC, and discussed as it pertains to external agencies and partners.

Strengths

- Finance section identified staff management and time tracking as a priority in the first hour of an activation. Sharing this priority underscored the importance of coordination among ICS sections in the EOC. Logistics section described importance of working closely with Finance section to clarify purchasing policies and regulations early in an activation.
- Emergency Manager reviewed sequence of events leading to EOC activation, providing context for how the EOC coordinates with the field response. Discussion emphasized that EOC role is a supportive and coordination role. Questions asked about the function of the EOC management section and the OEM representative in unified command further clarified operational coordination between City EOC staff and outside responding agencies.
- Discussion about operational coordination with external partners such as West Valley Community Center, law enforcement, fire, or the American Red Cross. Further discussion about existing contracts with external partners who may bring resources to a response clarified that resources may be identified in the operations section, and that this information needs to be shared with the logistics and finance sections for resource tracking purposes.

Areas for Improvement

The EOC operations section consisted of staff from a single City department for this exercise, which limited their perspective on section priorities. A diverse group of exercise participants from other Operations Section units such as care and shelter, transportation, law and fire may have provided a more complete discussion of this section's roles. The limited experience of the operations section led to a discussion of other sectional roles. Care and shelter, and transportation, in particular, were identified during the exercise discussion as leading units in the operations section during the early hours of an evacuation response.

Analysis

All five EOC ICS sections identified appropriate section priorities, reflecting a basic understanding of EOC functions. Four of five sections identified some form of operational coordination as a priority guiding early activation tasks. The strengths identified through the examples above demonstrate an understanding that EOC sections work together in support of overall objectives to facilitate a coordinated response. Discussion focused on both coordination among sections in the EOC and coordination with external partners including those in unified command and those that may contribute resources to the response.

Exercise participants sought clarification and understanding through appropriate questions. When weaknesses were identified, valuable discussion followed. For example, the narrow focus on damage assessment in the operations section, at the expense of other operations units and their functions, led to a discussion of the diversity of roles in this section, and provided an opportunity to review the standard composition of the EOC operations section, including transportation, emergency medical, fire, law, care and shelter.

Objective 2

Provide all decision makers with relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard, any cascading effects, and the status of the response.

Core Capability 2

Situational Assessment

Strengths

Types of information that would be relevant during a wildfire/evacuation response were described by the Planning Section. The Finance section described how information about staff time, and disaster-related expenses could be

captured without staff needing to learn entirely new accounting systems. The operations section described

Areas for Improvement

Analysis

Planning section effectively described how GIS data would be shared in the EOC using existing City mapping platform, and how additional information would be incorporated in the EOC. The management section described how information from the City would be shared with unified command, and how a City OEM rep in unified command would share information with the city. All sections were asked to think about what information they would need to work on their priorities and roles.

EXERCISE PARTICIPANTS

City of Cupertino EOC Staff			
Adam	Araza	GIS Specialist	Planning
Albert	Salvador	Operations Section Chief	Operations
Andre	Duurvoort	Planning Section Chief	Planning
Beth	Viajar	Finance/Administration Section Chief	Finance
Bob	Cascone	Volunteer	Planning-M
Giang	Dinh	Timekeeping Unit Leader	Finance
Gilee	Corral	Situation Analysis Unit Leader	Planning
Janet	Liang	Purchasing Unit Leader	Logistics
Jim	Oberhofer	Volunteer	Operations
Judi	Halchin	Volunteer	Operations
Karen	Levy	AFN Specialist	Management
Ken	Foot	Volunteer	Operations-M
Kenneth	Ericksen	EOC Coordinator	Logistics-M
Mariela	Vargas	Purchasing Unit Leader	Finance
Meredith	Gerhardt	EOC Liaison	Management
Min	Zhao	Purchasing Unit Leader	Finance
Paul	O'Sullivan	Damage Assessment Group Supervisor	Operations
Piu	Ghosh	Planning Section Chief	Planning
Siu	Ley	Personnel/Volunteer Unit Leader	Logistics

Sean	Hatch	Operations Section Chief	Operations
Steve	Hill	Volunteer	Operations
Teri	Gerhardt	Planning Section Chief	Planning
Thomas	Chin	EOC Coordinator	Finance-M
Toan	Quatch	Logistics Section Chief	Logistics
Toni	Oasay-Anderson	Timekeeping Unit Leader	Finance
Victoria	Tran	Purchasing Unit Leader	Finance
Zeng	Wang	Timekeeping Unit Leader	Finance
Adam	Araza	GIS Specialist	Planning

IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This IP has been developed specifically for the City of Cupertino as a result of Emergency Services Sector Tabletop Exercise conducted on 3/23/22.

Core Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Capability Element ¹	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
Core Capability 1: Operational Coordination	1. [Area for Improvement]	[Corrective Action 1]					
		[Corrective Action 2]					
		[Corrective Action 3]					
	2. [Area for Improvement]	[Corrective Action 1]					
		[Corrective Action 2]					
Core Capability 2: Situational Assessment	1. [Area for Improvement]	[Corrective Action 1]					
		[Corrective Action 2]					
		[Corrective Action 3]					
	2. [Area for Improvement]	[Corrective Action 1]					
		[Corrective Action 2]					

¹ Capability Elements are: Planning, Organization, Equipment, Training, or Exercise.

