**DR17 Control Room Guidance Note**

1. **Introduction**

Each simulation exercise requires a dedicated space from which the exercise management team can manage and stage the exercise. This space (office, room, tent or other suitable venue) is separate from that used by the exercise participants, and should support and enable the exercise management team to manage the exercise effectively. This is particularly helpful when more than one exercise location is used.

1. **Purpose**

The control room is the control centre for the simulation exercise, and serves as a dedicated and secure space for from which the exercise management team can manage the exercise. The space is used for briefing the exercise management team prior to the exercise; for team meetings (periodic check-ins); for debriefing observations; and for preparing and sending injects.

1. **Additional guidance/checklist**

The room should contain all the equipment, materials and resources that the exercise management team requires to implement the exercise.

**3.1 Room requirements**

* **Location**: the room needs to be in close proximity to the participants, enabling quick and easy access to the participants for delivery of injects and to observe activities.
* **Space & layout**: the facilitation room should be of sufficient size to seat the whole facilitation team comfortably, and able to host exercise team meetings. Wall space should be utilised effectively to display critical information and plans for the exercise management team.
* **Soundproofed**: the room needs to be soundproofed, or to be far enough away from the participants to ensure that all preparation, discussions and changes to the plan remain confidential.
* **Power supply**: the room should have sufficient power supply, outlets and adapters for the exercise management team to work efficiently and run all the required equipment.
* **Communications equipment**: ensure strong mobile phone, radio and internet connectivity. Ideally, a landline should be available as a backup alternative to mobile phones. Have a backup plan for contingencies (e.g. if the internet fails).

**3.2 Equipment & materials**

* **Signage**: signage should identify the “control room”, indicate that it is for the “exercise management team only,” and restrict access for participants.
* **Projector:** a digital projector can be used to project the inject matrix, email/inbox, or maps. This is a high-tech solution to display critical information on the wall for the exercise management team.
* **Whiteboard/flipchart and pens:** space should be made available to map participants’ responses and the key milestones of the exercise. This should constitute a visual tool that enables situational awareness for the exercise management team.
* **Required exercise material**: all key documents (master scenario, inject matrix, communications sheet, etc.) should be available in multiple printed copies for reference. If there are facilitators external to the CO who are not familiar with the office layout, it is advisable to provide maps of the locations of participants and key meeting rooms, in order to facilitate observation of the participants during the exercise.
* **Printer**: access to a printer during the exercise is useful for ad hoc injects and last-minute printing jobs.
* **Clock**: required to ensure all the team is tracking the same time.
* **First-aid kit**: an accessible first-aid kit and updated emergency telephone numbers should be on hand to facilitate a rapid response to an actual medical emergency.
* **Exercise observer identification, role-playing clothing, etc.**: identification tags (e.g. arm-bands or reflective jackets) are required for observers, to take them out of the game and make them “invisible” to participants. Appropriate clothing or equipment should be on hand for role-playing and the delivery some of the planned injects. (e.g. “media” tags, UN agency-branded clothes, hats, etc.).
* **Refreshments and food**: depending on the duration of the exercise, it may be necessary to arrange catering and refreshments in the control room, for the exercise management team.

**3.3 Setting up the control room**

* Set up before simulation day
* Ensure that all members of the exercise management team have all the equipment and materials that they require for their specific roles
* Information should be easily visible: attach important documents, inject matrices, etc. to the walls
* Have all the necessary equipment (stationery, printers, phones) needed to run the simulation.

**3.4 ENDEX**

At the end of the exercise (ENDEX), ensure that all exercise management team equipment and materials are removed from the control room, and returned or disposed of as required.