**FX04 Exercise Management Team Terms of Reference (TOR) Guidance Note**

1. **Introduction**

This guidance note describes the terms of reference (TOR) for the exercise management team for a functional exercise.

The exercise management team is responsible for designing, developing and implementing the simulation exercise project. Different members of this team may be brought on to the project at different phases in order to support the project activities.

1. **Roles & responsibilities**

For a FX, the team includes—at a minimum—an exercise director, an exercise controller, a lead facilitator, and an exercise evaluator.

One person can be appointed to fill several roles, or several persons can fill each role, depending on the nature, size and scope of the exercise.

* **Exercise director** (also known as the **exercise coordinator**, or **exercise manager**):

This role, usually occupied by a single person, coordinates the planning team and has overall responsibility for the exercise. The exercise manager also develops the main concept and design of the exercise, acting as a project manager and bringing additional staff into the planning team as needed to ensure that the exercise development remains on track (e.g. bringing in subject matter experts during the scenario development). Because this function is so critical, it should be assigned to an individual who can devote significant time to the exercise throughout the process. This person must be familiar with the plan being tested, and should have an understanding of the kind of response that is expected. However, this person should *not* be expected to participate in the exercise, as he or she will be unable to participate in an authentic way if involved in the design and conduct of the exercise. In a FX, the exercise director is usually the manager, supervisor or department head responsible for the specific operation or function to be tested.

* **Exercise controller**(this function may or may not be carried out by the exercise director):

The role of the exercise controller is to ensure that the exercise runs smoothly and achieves its stated purpose and objectives. The exercise controller must monitor and adjust the exercise to ensure that the exercise achieves its goals. If the exercise evolves beyond its intended scope, the exercise controller should intervene, either by adjusting the timing of the injects, or by delivering ad hoc injects, which are additional pieces of information that are developed during the exercise to advance, slow, or redirect exercise play. Participants often make unanticipated decisions, and the exercise controller must be able to respond to these decisions in line with the exercise objectives. He or she can be assisted by role players and/or evaluators, who will be assigned to specific injects of the scenario, and/or who will control the flow of participants’ interventions.

* **Lead facilitator:** The role of the facilitator is to deliver injects to the participants as directed by the exercise controller and the MEL/inject matrix. He or she will work closely with the exercise controller and if required will adjust the timing and delivery of the (ad hoc) injects to ensure the exercise remains on track.

Rarely can all of the agencies implicated in a plan participate in an exercise. Also, in the normal course of their duties in an emergency response participants might consult with international agencies or other groups who are not participating in the exercise (Ministries, Red Cross/Red Crescent, other NGOs, UN agencies, etc.). During the conduct of the exercise, if a participant needs information from such a non-participating entity, he or she contacts the facilitator or the simulation switchboard (depending on the communication setup) to simulate the required consultation and obtain the necessary information.

This function calls for a high level of understanding of both the plan being validated and the kind of responses that the non-participating people and agencies would provide. The subject matter experts who supported the development of the exercise can be extremely helpful in this function. The number of simulators will vary according to the number of players, the length of the exercise, the level of knowledge and training of the simulators, and the nature of the communication channels available.

* **Lead evaluator** (this function may or may not be carried out by the lead facilitator): While an exercise can have several evaluators during the actual exercise, the lead evaluator is a member of the planning team throughout the exercise development process. The lead evaluator should be an expert on the subject of the exercise, but also good at writing reports and data analysis. The lead evaluator develops the evaluation strategy, coordinates the tasks of other evaluators, and works closely with the facilitator and the exercise manager to lead the debriefs and produce the first draft of the exercise report.

In addition to the above roles, additional roles can be identified and assigned to people if required. Staff can be assigned to more than one role if needed.

* **Subject matter experts:** subject matter experts contribute to the development of the scenario and injects, and verify that the events depicted are likely to provoke the expected response(s). It is possible that some subject matter experts may not be members of the planning team for the duration of the project, but may only contribute to the scenario.

Subject matter experts may also act as evaluators, facilitators and role players during the implementation phase.

* **Logistics:** the logistics coordinator is responsible for providing organizational and logistics support to the exercise. Logistics means the arrangement of facilities, rooms, transport and resources for the exercise. If the exercise is conducted in the field, the logistics coordinator assesses the capacity of the infrastructure, equipment and materiel of participating teams/organisations during the field visit. He or she makes the appropriate recommendations to the exercise director and key stakeholders in order to update them before the exercise. This function can be carried out by one or more people.
* **IT support**: this function ensures that all IT equipment and processes needed by the exercise management team are available and working. Smooth operation of IT equipment (projector, sound system, live translation services, etc.) during the exercise is critical to its success. This function can be carried out by one or more people.
* **Secretarial/administrative support:** the secretarial, or administrative, support function works closely with the exercise manager and the logistics and IT support staff. This is the section of the planning team that sends invitations to participants, oversees the production of exercise materials (printing, copying, etc.), arranges and takes minutes of planning team meetings, and distributes internal communications materials about the exercise (putting up posters, emailing newsletters, etc.). This function can be carried out by one or more people.

**● Observers:** Observers do not have a particular role during the exercise, apart from observing it. Observers can comprise any stakeholders interested in the exercise, including government representatives; UN partners; NGOs; donors; Red Cross/Crescent partners; private partners; media; and other key stakeholders.

1. **Additional advice**

* If the exercise participants will be at multiple locations, consider having deputy controllers at each location to keep a close eye on the action and remain in contact with the lead controller. The deputy controllers should have a copy of the master events list and all the injects, and should be able to deliver injects to participants at their location if necessary. This arrangement is especially useful in the event of a failure of the communications system. Having controllers at each location also provides more feedback to the lead controller on the pace of the exercise, and allows the collection of additional data for the evaluation of the exercises.
* Ensure everybody is aware of their roles & responsibilities.
* Ensure constant communication within the exercise management team (this is very important!).
* Have regular “check-in” meetings to ensure everyone is on track, up to date and aware of progress, issues and/or changes.
* Work as a team. All those involved in developing and running the exercise should support one another in delivering the project. All staff should communicate once tasks are completed, or if there is a challenge to solve.
* Look for solutions - find ways through challenges.
* Be flexible. Adapt to the situation, remember WHY the exercise is being run and keep the project moving forward.