ARG/US

TRAINING BRIEF

Training Topic:

Emergency Response Plan (ERP) Drill– 03/09

(Full drill scenario, previously scheduled and approved by Management, unannounced, internal communications only)

Why your ERP needs a Drill

Drills must be periodically conducted to provide training to staff, to verify the adequacy and accuracy of emergency policies, procedures, and equipment. Familiarizing your company employees with important external emergency organizations is an added benefit.

Drills are intended to prepare employees to effectively respond to real emergencies. In addition, the lessons learned and corrective action stemming from drills will enhance accident prevention and response capabilities, and allow you to gauge the effectiveness of your ERP. Your Emergency Response Team will learn how to work in cohesive unison during a dynamic, high pressure situation. Your personnel need the confidence competency yields to successfully evaluate information and options, and make effective decisions based on the information and resources available.

Preparing for the Unannounced Drill

This drill format should be used for one of two purposes: as a culmination of training and previous drills, or to impress upon your operation how difficult emergency response can be. If the unannounced format is used for the former, make sure your organization will benefit. Springing this drill on a flight department will have effect, for better or worse. If used for the latter, be prepared to keep things under control because it's going to be a wild ride. Remember to obtain prior approval for this drill.

Your drill should include:

- An assigned drill observer to note progress and record actions.
- Simulation of the required phone calls with the correct, verified phone numbers.

- Assembling the Emergency Response Team.
- Coordination of support requirements.
- Completion of all actions items with as much realism as practical.
- Complete paperwork details of a fictitious flight, including information about the local area where the accident takes place.

The Drill

- Distribute details for a fictional (but realistic) flight event to the appropriate departments just before the drill notification phone call. Ensure a flight itinerary and detailed manifest with 3 fictional passengers is available in the proper location. Use actual crew names and aircraft. Don't do any preparation whatsoever; this is meant to evaluate a realistic event. Because you are using actual flight crew names, make sure the information stays controlled inside the company!

- At the beginning of each phone call, remember to state "This is an emergency response drill. My name is ___. This is not an actual emergency. All events are simulated. All phone calls will be made to (your number) for this simulation."

- **0 HOUR:** Place an incoming phone call at the designated time to an appropriate contact inside the company. "This is the FAA tower manager from ___(the away airfield in the fictional flight event). There has been an aircraft accident involving one of your aircraft approaching the airport. I verified the tail number with the filed flight plan (tail number- _________). The aircraft is reported to have impacted the ground 13 miles from the airport. Local emergency crews are responding at this time."
- *Don't give your name and number, the receiving person should pull out the initial call sheet and ask for more information.* You have no further information at this time. Provide your recall number when asked. Ask for a return call to relay the number of persons on the aircraft when it departed.
- Notification should be initiated immediately. The drill observer must carefully record the ongoing actions. The individual who received the call should contact the designated party in your operation. Accurate details should be passed, and information verified.

- **0+05 HOUR:** A return phone call for verification should be made soon. Provide the same details as in the initial call. This information will be enough for the designated individual to launch the response plan and begin gathering members of your response team. The internal notification process should be in full swing in the next few minutes, and assigned members must begin assembling to coordinate with the response director. Allow another 10 minutes for members of the response team to form.

- **0+15 HOUR:** Place a series of incoming phone calls. Acting as a member of the media calling for information, try to extract details from anyone who will talk. Repeat these media calls periodically, and note how they are handled by the receiver.
- Required notification to the NTSB should be starting now. Each member should be commencing assigned tasks as the response team stands up. In the next 15 minutes records and required paper work should be gathered.
- Look for the senior member of the response team to conduct an internal briefing fro employees when appropriate. The rumor mill will be running at high speed, and employees will need accurate information.

- **0+30 HOUR:** All records and paperwork should be assembled. Further details of the accident can now be released: the accident aircraft is a total strike, and acting as a local emergency responder via phone call, explain that survivors have not been located yet. If the local responders have not been passed the manifest information yet, it should be completed now. Simulated outgoing phone calls to the NTSB should be accomplished by this point. Your team must make other simulated phone calls to obtain as much info as possible. When someone does place an outgoing phone call to a specific number (have them look up anything required, like a local hospital, police, etc.), indicate the condition of everyone on the aircraft is unknown.

- **0+35 HOUR:** Place a phone call simulating a call from a local TV station at the airport locale asking for information. Be persistent, a pain in the neck. Observe your team as they make decisions concerning the status of victims.
- Place a simulated call from local police (crash site) notifying that there were no survivors.
- Next of kin (NOK) notification procedures should now begin. These procedures should be defined in your ERP; simulated contact with the notifying agency (your number) is made; instruct the response team regarding your NOK notification actions as the notifying agency.
- It might be a good time for the team to contact both your insurance company and any legal support that is required.
- A media statement should be considered by now. The statement should be predrafted, vetted through appropriate company channels, and released by the designated company spokesperson.
- Step back and ensure the drill is under control.

- **0+ 50 HOUR:** Introduce a media report with false or info. Present the team with a realistic quandary they have to work through– there is a TV report that there were two survivors. They shouldn't become distracted, and remain focused on the ERP duties and assignments.
- A decision regarding dispatching someone to the site should be evaluated by now. The travel details need to be worked out (booking air travel, hotels, rental car, etc.); how effectively is this executed?
- Evaluate how internal communication has progressed. Are all of the appropriate

personnel in your company apprised of the events? The details of the accident should be consistent throughout the company by now.

- Has the Next of Kin notification progressed satisfactorily?

- **1+10 HOUR:** The response must be well coordinated by this point. Your ERP details should have been accomplished or are assigned. Compiling a synopsis of the events, and gathering all required records pertaining to the upcoming investigation will be underway. Where are the records being stored pending NTSB requests for acquisition? They must be kept in a secure location with tightly controlled access. Internal information control should also be well organized at this point; the response team should have a reliable and accurate depiction of the accident details. Look for individual team members to cross brief their checklist progress with other members.

- **1+30 HOUR:** Evaluate the NOK notification. Was it handled with the required sensitivity? Ensure the drill has worked through the point you have designed, then stand everyone down, and begin clean up. Hold a debriefing with involved employees after the drill to prompt analysis of the effectiveness of all aspects of the emergency action plan, and your company's response. Collect all drill paperwork and notes. Request participant feedback, and set a deadline for submission.

Wrapping It Up

There is a great deal to be learned from the drill you just conducted.

- Did information flow effectively and accurately? Were significant details left out as the response progressed?
- Was the Go-team ready to be dispatched? Were there significant logistics problems?
- Insurance company involvement should be evaluated, and a comparison of expectations to actualities accomplished.
- How did the mechanics of your response plan work? Flaws should be detected and repaired.
- How did the response team perform? Target training in the areas needed.
- Are the employed external resources meeting expectations?
- How did company employees respond? Perhaps a general briefing describing aviation accidents is in order.

Analyze company performance, and create a summary report for documentation. Brief appropriate leadership, and define the actions and resources required for continuous improvement of the Emergency Response Program. Set goals for the next ERP drill based on lessons learned from this drill.