



TRAINING BRIEF

Training Topic:

ERP DRILL TABLETOP EXERCISE— OFF-SITE AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

Information for the ERP Drill Facilitator

Tabletop Exercises

This exercise usually involves all emergency response team members in an informal setting. Using a hazard-specific scenario, supporting documentation, and injected messages simulating field-derived information, the participants discuss required actions while in a controlled training environment. With a facilitator to keep the discussions focused, the outcomes derived from a tabletop exercise may include new policy, plan revisions, and training requirements.

A tabletop exercise is a focused practice activity that places the participants in a simulated situation requiring them to function in the capacity that would be expected of them in a real event. Its purpose is to promote preparedness by testing policies and plans and by training personnel. Participants should be able to recognize and prioritize required tasks, and use ERP forms effectively.

This ERP drill is a simulation of an off-site aircraft accident that results in an injured crewmember while conducting a scheduled repositioning flight. The intent is to exercise many different aspects of the operation's ERP, and may also demand some other company procedures as the drill progresses. As facilitator, you are the referee for this exercise, so ensure you adequately control the release of information to the participants and take detailed notes to aid in debriefing the results and correcting any plan deficiencies. Schedule this exercise on a day when managers are willing to devote a few hours to fully complete all necessary portions.

This drill is designed to be a table top exercise that will evaluate the preparation and response of personnel throughout the company, and may also include corporation entities if applicable. It is critical that each interacting member accurately and completely perform or describe their required actions during the tabletop exercise. Observe participants carefully and ensure they are documenting and executing as intended in the ERP.

Drill Phone Calls: If possible set up an exercise phone number (either a cell phone or land line) that you as the facilitator will use to simulate some of the external communication. When a response team member or other individual is required to make a phone call, ensure the number they are calling is vocalized to verify it's correct, then utilize the exercise phone line. All phone conversations should be documented with detailed descriptions of who was called and a brief written summary of the call. If it is necessary for that individual to leave the exercise room to make the call, encourage them to do so.

Make sure you as facilitator keep a log; your notes will be used to debrief the exercise, identify problems and evaluate the need for changes in the ERP. Also ensure response team members are documenting all of their actions and external conversations.

Remember the intent of the drill is to train and increase the proficiency of the emergency response team and also discover any deficiencies in the ERP itself. The end product should be a better prepared team and an improved or validated ERP.

Preparation (Phase 1: Flight Details)

1. Create a realistic simulated flight manifest and flight profile and accident location for the drill event. Use standard company forms and fill in with realistic info and remember to label "ERP DRILL." make sure these forms are available to the team members when they need to retrieve them.
2. Gather the response team into the tabletop exercise area or room. Ensure each team member has a copy of the appropriate ERP folders/forms. Provide a brief overview of the purpose of the exercise and answer any questions team members may have. Emphasize that any communication external to the exercise space must be prefaced with "This is an emergency response drill."
3. Identify a member of your organization that will be receiving the initial phone call notifying them of the incident. A phone call from the accident airport manager reveals the following scenario information. After the message taker thoroughly reviews the event description take it away; the message taker will describe the event details from memory in the reporting phone call.
- 4.

Scenario: Your aircraft is conducting a cross country flight in order to reposition the airframe and crew for a contract you have recently obtained. During a planned refuel stop the aircraft began to roll uncontrollably to the right with the main rotor blades contacting the ground. The airframe came to rest on the ramp laying on its right side. The pilot, who is the sole occupant, struck his head on the window and was knocked unconscious.

5. REMEMBER TO MAKE SURE ALL PHONE CALLS ARE PREFACED WITH “THIS IS AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE DRILL.” Instruct the message taker to contact the operation via phone call to report the situation. The call should go to either a general reception phone number or to the person the message taker wishes to contact. Let the message taker decide who to call. Go to the room where the team is gathered and begin observations as they receive the phone call or message.
6. This is now the turnover to the home base operation and the beginning of the emergency response plan execution. Hopefully the call from the message taker was recorded on an initial notification form of some kind. When the event information is received the primary decision maker should be informed and activation of the ERP should follow.
7. Release the exercise inputs (H+ minutes) at the elapsed time intervals indicated for each one. Controlling the release of information not only improves realism, but allows the entire response team to participate as necessary. Avoid providing more information than would be available in a real situation.
8. As facilitator make sure you take thorough notes and document significant observations. At the conclusion of the exercise you will use those notes to evaluate the response team’s actions and the ERP itself. Record any stated concerns by the participants which may require reworking of the ERP. If appropriate you may want to schedule a meeting and present the team with a finished summary of the exercise, open items, problems that were identified, and other suggestions.



ERP Exercise– Phase 2 (Timeline)**Exercise Inputs: Timed releases**

H Hour: The event information is passed to the participating message taker, who then places the phone call previously described in the preparation section (Phase 1).

Goal: It is imperative that the information passed from the reporting airport manager be documented and passed to a response team member. The person taking the call should use a standard ERP form and record all applicable details. A member(s) of the response team activates or acquires permission to activate the ERP.

Facilitator Notes: *Upon the initial onset of a serious aircraft incident/accident with possible crewmember injuries many things must be considered. Where is the aircraft and the passengers; is there a medical facility readily available; what is the status of all of soles on board? At this point it's important that the team focus on initiating the ERP and organizing the initial first response steps. It is also important to begin considering how to communicate with airport personnel; assume the flight crew are unavailable for a short time period.*

H+10 minutes: The Company records show that the accident helicopter was conducting a repositioning flight with one scheduled fuel stop and one pilot onboard.

Goal: Resources of the company should be directed to identify the pilot by name, and the aircraft by tail number. The pilots records and applicable flight manifest should be readily available. Consult the records for any pertinent information. If your crewmember has special needs this needs to be identified right here, and quickly.

Facilitator Notes: *Make sure you keep you crewmember information up to date, and that any special needs or concerns are noted.*

H+20 minutes: Airfield manager confirms that one victim was extracted from the aircraft and taken to a local hospital with injuries. He informs you that the victim was unconscious but has no further information about their condition. The aircraft is substantially damaged, laying on its side, and the airfield manager needs a rep. to come out and help plan for moving the wreckage so they can reopen the airport.

Goal: If you have a 'Go-Team' this is where you begin the process of deploying it. The management team can now go forward with several items on the ERP checklists: Identify the crew, notify their families, send a rep to the hospital, notify the customer, call the FAA and/or NTSB, and call the legal and insurance reps. The management team should also recall to those ops and maintenance experts needed to man the on-site deployment team if they are not on the premises. These actions should be done 'in-house' and outside calls simulated for this exercise.

Facilitator Notes: *This is an important time in the drill. There are a lot of calls taking place, and it is easy to get behind. Take notes on how things are progressing so you can see what areas need attention.*

H+30 minutes: The hospital calls with preliminary reports on the condition of the pilot. The injuries consist of mainly bruises but he did also suffer from a concussion and will be admitted for observation.

Goal: Is this classified as an accident or an incident? Read the paragraphs of NTSB Part 830 and see if this meets the accident criteria.

Facilitator Notes: *There should be no hesitation in the realization that this will be an accident. How up to date are you pilot files...Aircraft MX documented as well? Have you had any outsourced MX lately? You can be assured that they are going to be the center of intense scrutiny.*

H+40 minutes: A reporter from the local paper calls your operator. He wants a statement on the accident. Within a few minutes another reporter calls, this time from CNN. They will be going live with a shot of your aircraft from a helicopter in 20 minutes.

Goal: The “PR manager” or equivalent should write a brief statement of what happened using the guidelines in the ERP. The team can work on the wording of the release. Do you have a manager who will act as the family assistance team, meeting face to face with families of crewmembers involved in an accident? Can the responder perform duties listed in the ERP?

Facilitator Notes: *With the advent of the ‘information age’ it is not difficult to get aircraft registration information from the FAA website. Watch to see how your PR department (or individual) handles this. Stick to the minimum info you can give. By this time, the families of the crew will have been notified. If not, you have a huge problem on your hands. We are hitting you with the media attention 40 minutes in to the drill. That is more time than you should expect, so keep that in mind.*

H+45 minutes: The NTSB rep calls to say they are treating the mishap as an accident, and want all records and manuals sequestered, so the investigator can begin reviewing them later. The aircraft can be moved, as long as pictures are taken of the entire site before evidence is disturbed. By the way, have you tested the crew for drug and alcohol use, following the accident? You also need to begin working on the NTSB Accident report form.

Goal: Managers with control of crew and maintenance manuals and records have responsibilities for safeguarding crew and aircraft records and manuals in the event of an accident. These actions should be accomplished during this exercise, to show how it is done, and whether it can actually be accomplished, given the current state of records and manuals.

Facilitator Notes: *Do you have a procedure for post-accident testing of crewmembers? Do you have each crewmember's work and training history in a single form, up to date? Once you have the results (negative, hopefully) back from these tests, it is one less item to worry about.*

H+55 minutes: The airfield manager has contracted for a crane and a flatbed truck, and the question is: what do you want to do with the airframe? Do you have a storage area where you can store the wreckage and allow the investigation to continue?

Goal: Reorganize work, clear space for long term work, and accident investigation. Secure other resources, or subcontractor, for remaining flights that were scheduled for the accident aircraft, and crew.

Facilitator Notes: *It helps to have a good relationship with the airports you frequent. When something like this happens, they can be an invaluable resource. You don't want to be looking through the phone book under "CRANES" and hoping to find someone who won't turn your damaged aircraft into a totaled aircraft!*

H+60 minutes: You receive a call from the accident pilot. He is concerned about the expenses accrued in the hospital. He gives you the details of the accident, and tells you he believes the cause of the accident was caused by dynamic rollover. The airport manager calls with information regarding moving and storing the aircraft.

Goal: View the different liability issues that should now be apparent. Involve the non-line managers to discuss legal actions that occur after an accident. Also, personnel should be involved in briefing the survivor and his family on what benefits are being provided.

Analyst Notes: *This should generate some interesting conversations regarding the liability issue. Also, someone should be thinking about securing the aircraft. Didn't someone's checklist have something about contracting with local cops or private security to protect your assets?*

H Complete: When at a logical stop point, end the exercise. Ask team members to complete any notes and other documentation and then collect all of the papers, folders, etc. Give the participants a 15 minute break and then gather back into the space for a debrief of the exercise.

Goal: All of the documentation that occurred during the exercise is valuable history that can be used to evaluate team performance and the ERP itself. Ensure all documentation is organized for post exercise evaluation.

Facilitator Notes: *This is not the time for a full analysis of the drill, but it is important to provide some interesting feedback on the observations. Review your facilitator notes and prepare some highlighted and important observations for the debrief.*

Team Debrief: Good Job to the response team! They dedicated their time and worked through the exercise. Use the debrief to review the exercise scenario and discuss strengths and weakness identified in the initial review. Encourage interaction and questions during the debrief, and be careful not to criticize individuals directly. Develop some simple takeaways and action items for the team to improve the ERP.

Performance weakness should be examined from a process and training perspective; if there are individual problems they should be presented to the team leader or applicable manager.

