EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN DRILL

ERP EXERCISE

Pre-announced Full Drill Scenario – Runway Excursion

INFORMATION FOR THE DRILL FACILITATOR

Exercises Details

Personnel Involved

This exercise generally involves all emergency response team members in a normal workday setting. Using a hazard-specific scenario, supporting documentation, and injected messages simulating field-derived information, the participants perform the required actions to the maximum extent possible while in a controlled training environment. With a facilitator to keep the discussions focused, the outcomes derived from a full drill exercise may include new policy, plan revisions, and training requirements. Due to the nature of this specific drill; it is highly recommended that the operator attempts to involve other agencies (e.g., fire department, airport ops, etc.) in the drill. Emergency services and Airport Operations drill regularly and are usually very receptive to doing joint drills as this helps ensure that the emergency response plans of each entity are properly coordinated during an actual response.

About the Exercise

A full drill exercise is a focused practice activity that places the entire operation in a simulated situation requiring employees to function in a capacity expected of them in a real ERP event. Its purpose is to promote preparedness by exposing the entire operation to an artificial emergency situation while evaluating employee actions and company policies and plans. Participants should be able to recognize and prioritize required tasks and use the ERP effectively.

This ERP drill is a simulation of a runway excursion. The aircraft landed long due to an unstabilized approach, departed the end of the runway crashing through the airport fence, and came to rest on an adjacent park after hitting several trees. The aircraft has substantial damage to its fuselage, wings, and landing gear. A tree branch went through the windscreen of the cockpit causing injuries to the SIC. Several people who were in the park at the time of the accident were hit by flying debris and sustained injuries of varying extent. Weather reported at the time of the event was IMC with a 900-foot broken ceiling, 2.5 miles visibility with light rain (-RA) and a direct tailwind of 8 knots.

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 company managers are willing to devote a few hours to fully complete all necessary portions.

This drill is designed to be a scheduled pre-announced full drill exercise that will evaluate the preparation and response of personnel throughout the company and may also include a coordinated response with other organizations, if applicable. It is critical that each participating employee accurately and completely perform and document their required actions during the exercise. Observe participants carefully and ensure they are documenting and executing as intended in the ERP.

Your drill should include:

- Simulation of the required phone calls with the correct, verified phone numbers.
- Assembling the Emergency Response Team.
- Coordination of support requirements.
- Completion of all action items with as much realism as practical.

If able, the drill should also include at least one potential failure (e.g. absence of key personnel, power supply shortages, communications failures, etc.) that could affect the execution of the ERP. Personnel should identify the failure and establish contingency plans necessary for the safe conclusion of an actual emergency situation. Particular emphasis should be placed upon ensuring the operational reliability and compatibility of all communication equipment designated for use during an incident.

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 members and 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

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. The exercise phone line must be published as part of the exercise pre-brief. 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.

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 the exercise phone line for this simulation."

Exercise Pre-Brief

1. Announce the day and time of the exercise via company communication channels. All employees must know a simulated emergency drill will occur at a specific date and time. Send out reminder notices as required.

2. Ensure each team member is notified when the drill will occur and brief any employees that may be involved in some capacity

3. Make sure each manager has a copy of the ERP and has read through the portion that pertains to their department.

4. Set up the exercise briefing the day prior or day of the drill. Make sure all required attendees are present.

5. Provide an exercise phone number to the response team and remind everyone 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 (exercise number) for this simulation."

6. Emphasize to everyone that they need to fully participate and perform their duties to the maximum extent possible, as if this were an actual emergency response.

7. Ask for questions and discuss any points of confusion.

Preparing for the Drill

1. Schedule the drill for a typical day for flight operations and maintenance at home base. (i.e., types of activities that would be conducted during a normal day, number of aircraft in the hangar and/or on the ramp, number of personnel working, aircraft arriving and departing etc.)

2. ***Optional: consider inviting other organizations to participate and exercise their own Emergency Response Plans alongside yours (where applicable).

3. Create a realistic simulated flight manifest and flight profile and determine the accident location for the drill event. Use standard company forms and fill in with realistic info and remember to label "ERP DRILL."

4. Simulate the flight scenario as an actual event in the best possible way. Place it in the flight scheduling program or whatever your operation uses with appropriate takeoff and landing times, and make sure to clearly and boldly indicate it is a drill.

5. Utilize a flight crew member and segregate him/her from other company personnel. Provide the tear out of the scenario provided on page 6 of this document. After the employee thoroughly reviews the event description take it away; the employee will describe the event details from memory in the reporting phone call.

6. REMEMBER TO MAKE SURE ALL PHONE CALLS ARE PREFACED WITH "THIS IS AN EMERGENCY RESPONSE DRILL." Instruct the crew member to contact the operation via phone call to report the situation. The call should go to either to a general reception phone number or to the person the flight crew member wishes to contact. Let the flight crew member decide who to call. Go to the general area where the phone call is directed and observe the actions taken during and immediately after the call.

7. This is now the turnover to the home base operation and the beginning of the emergency response plan execution. Hopefully the call from the flight crew member was recorded on an initial notification form of some kind. When the initial event information is received the primary decision maker should be informed and activation of the ERP should follow.

8. Release the exercise inputs (H+ minutes) at the elapsed time intervals indicated. Controlling the release of information not only improves realism but allows the entire response team to participate with a realistic flow. Avoid providing more information than would be available in a real situation.

9. 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 post-exercise meeting and present the team with a finished summary of the exercise, open items, problems that were identified, and other suggestions.

ERP Drill PROCEDURES

Phase 2

SCENARIO

Company aircraft, NXXXX, has slid off the end of the runway at XYZ airport. The aircraft came to rest in a park adjacent to the airport after going through the airport fence and impacting several trees. There is substantial damage to the fuselage, wings, and landing gear. The SIC was impaled by a tree branch that broke through the windscreen. There were several bystanders in the park that were hit by flying debris. Full extent of injuries and damage are unknown at this time.

Exercise Inputs: Timed releases

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."

H Hour

The event information is passed to the participating employee 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 employee be documented and passed to a response team member so that they can verify and confirm the details. The person taking the call should use a standard ERP form and record all applicable details. No comments regarding the accident should be made until the information is verified.

Facilitator Notes:

Upon the initial report of the aircraft accident involving NXXXX the potential is high for distractions and misinformation at this point in the timeline. Are there injuries, are emergency responders on scene, who is involved at this time? All of these details are important but at this point it's important that the employees involved focus on confirming and organizing the initial information.

Additional Notes/Lessons Learned

Action Items

H+10 minutes:

Once the initial report has been verified, the designated individual responsible for coordinating all company emergency response activities will activate the emergency response plan. Simulation of the internal notification process should be in full swing and all contact information for the emergency response team should be checked and verified.

Goal:

The response team leader should ensure the ERP is properly activated and critical managers are alerted. It's critical at this point to document all available incoming information. All team members review specific duties and responsibilities. The team leader should begin directing selected external notifications as required by the ERP.

Facilitator Notes:

The call list should be activated. Calls should be made to verify the phone numbers are accurate. This is where you might discover what phone numbers have not been updated, and who is difficult to reach, for example: Mrs. Smith is on vacation, who is doing her job? Make sure team members document all external communications. It is also important to begin considering how to communicate with airport personnel, local emergency responders, and other entities that may be involved.

Additional Notes/Lessons Learned

Action Items

H+15 minutes:

Operations should obtain the exercise manifest, verify the original flight profile and provide the flight manifest to the response team. The response team is now fully aware of all available information and should be actively discussing what other information they can obtain and validate.

Goal:

The team leader should be organizing the response members, compiling available information, and conducting a status brief by this point. The leader now begins to send team members out to execute their specific duties and report back. A priority at this point is passenger & crew status information. All team members should have their respective ERP sections in hand and are utilizing them effectively.

Facilitator Notes:

Recalls may continue depending on personnel location and accessibility. Outdated phone numbers may create confusion; observe all methods of communication for effectiveness. Make sure team members document all communications. Personnel assignments should be made based on who is available to fill the ERC positions. Actions should not be delayed due to personnel being unavailable.

Additional Notes/Lessons Learned

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Action Items

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H+20 minutes:

Place a call acting as the airport manager at the accident location. Indicate that the first responders are on-scene and are currently working on extracting the SIC from the aircraft. The passengers and the rest of the crew appear to be fine but are being evaluated by EMTs. Several bystanders were hit by flying debris. Majority of the injuries are minor; however, there are at least two people with critical injuries that have already been taken to the hospital.

Goal:

The response team should be gathering their specific positional information by this time, and the procedures for NTSB notification reviewed as well as the procedures for participating as a party to the NTSB's investigation. The insurance company should also be contacted by this point to initiate any claim action but more importantly to gain their response assistance. It's also a good time for the team to contact any legal support that is required.

Facilitator Notes:

Communication of the circumstances from event site to the response team is crucial in all emergencies. Carefully monitor the accuracy of information as it is assembled and communicated. Initial information about an event is usually incomplete and often incorrect. It is critical to verify information and avoid making assumptions or misstatements.

Additional Notes/Lessons Learned

Action Items

H+30 minutes:

Place a phone call simulating a call from a media outlet asking for information. Be persistent, a pain in the neck. Observe your team as they make decisions concerning the status of the crew and passengers. Accurate accident information should be passed to other company employees to prevent rumor overload.

Goal:

Communications should be managed to ensure that facts surrounding a reported emergency are properly vetted prior to releasing any external statements. All information relative to an accident or incident or other emergency should be treated as extremely sensitive and held in the strictest confidence.

There will be multiple media outlets that pick up the story. With the news of the accident already spreading on social media a first acknowledgement of the event (or that it is aware of emerging reports) should be issued as soon as possible. This first brief message would ideally be posted on one or more of the company's social media platforms and also appear as a link on the company's main website.

All employees need to refrain from speculating or commenting on the emergency and should direct all questions to the designated spokesman. Individuals within the management team who use social media personally should also be persuaded to limit their comments to the approved messaging, which must remain authentic. Other employees should also be reminded of the company's social media policy.

Facilitator Notes:

Monitoring online conversations ("social listening") about the company is an essential form of intelligence, particularly during a crisis, and will allow the company to adapt its communication strategy and engage more effectively with key influencers as the story develops.

The information disseminated to others must be clear, factual and completely absent conjecture about the event. Observe the team member's communication carefully and determine if they are creating any ambiguity about the event.

To the extent required, all public statements regarding an accident or incident should be adequately coordinated with NTSB. Only the NTSB may release factual information on an investigation. Coordinate media releases and press conferences with the NTSB public affairs officer.

Additional Notes/Lessons Learned

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Action Items

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H+45 minutes:

Multiple comments have been posted on social media about the accident. Some of the comments include incorrect statements. Observe how the team reacts to this false information. Evaluate how internal communication has progressed. Are all of the appropriate personnel in your company apprised of the events?

Goal:

The team shouldn't become distracted by false statements or negative comments. They should remain focused on the ERP duties and assignments. A policy should be established for responding to comments, or for correcting any misinformation or incorrect statements which are posted.

Facilitator Notes:

Take a step back and ensure the drill is under control. Observe how your team handles distractions such as a false report but make sure it does not impair the progress of the response progression. Monitor your team for signs of stress.

Additional Notes/Lessons Learned

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Action Items

H+50 minutes:

A decision regarding dispatching a go-team 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? 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. Look for individual team members to cross brief their checklist progress with other members.

Goal:

The physical status of the aircraft may have been discussed or resolved previously; if not it should be addressed now to ensure it is secure and nothing is touched pending NTSB investigation. Coordination with necessary outside elements is now established.

Facilitator Notes:

Carefully observe coordination with other company entities. You should observe the team with a clear, coherent picture of the event by this point; not everything will be known, but team coordination should be smooth and strategy clear.

Additional Notes/Lessons Learned

Action Items

H+60 minutes:

An accurate picture of the accident is crucial by this point and all or most of the functions and assignments should be ongoing, with each team member following their respective checklists or direction from the team leader. Introduce any additional information as necessary based on the exercise direction to this point in time.

Goal:

Team members execute their responsibilities with limited direction and don't introduce confusion. Documentation of all the team activities is accurate and complete. Coordination with necessary outside elements is now established.

Facilitator Notes:

You can let the exercise flow on its own to the point of completion. Introduce further information to complement existing details as necessary but avoid injecting new circumstances at this point in the exercise. Use judgment to decide when enough is enough and the participants have gained all they can from the training.

Additional Notes/Lessons Learned

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Action Items

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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.

Additional Notes/Lessons Learned

Action Items

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, answer questions, and discuss strengths and weaknesses identified in the initial review. Encourage interaction and discussion during the debrief. Be careful not to criticize individuals directly. Develop some simple takeaways and action items for the team to improve the ERP.

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

Team Debrief Notes and Lessons Learned

Action Items

Post Drill Report:

Create a detailed summary write-up of the exercise, with particular focus on team training recommendations. The strengths and weaknesses of the ERP should also be described. Make sure to use all of the documentation from the exercise to highlight and support conclusions and observations. Set goals for the next ERP drill based on lessons learned from this drill.

Document:

Ensure the training is documented for the response team members and assist in any necessary changes to the ERP.

It could happen on any given day. Be prepared!

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