

# Functional Exercises

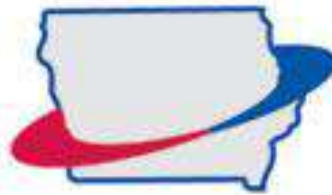
An overview  
for the  
Safeguard Iowa Partnership



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# Welcome and Introductions

- **John Halbrook** –  
Exercise Planner HSEMD



- **Steve Warren** –  
Exercise Planner HSEMD



# Webinar Objectives

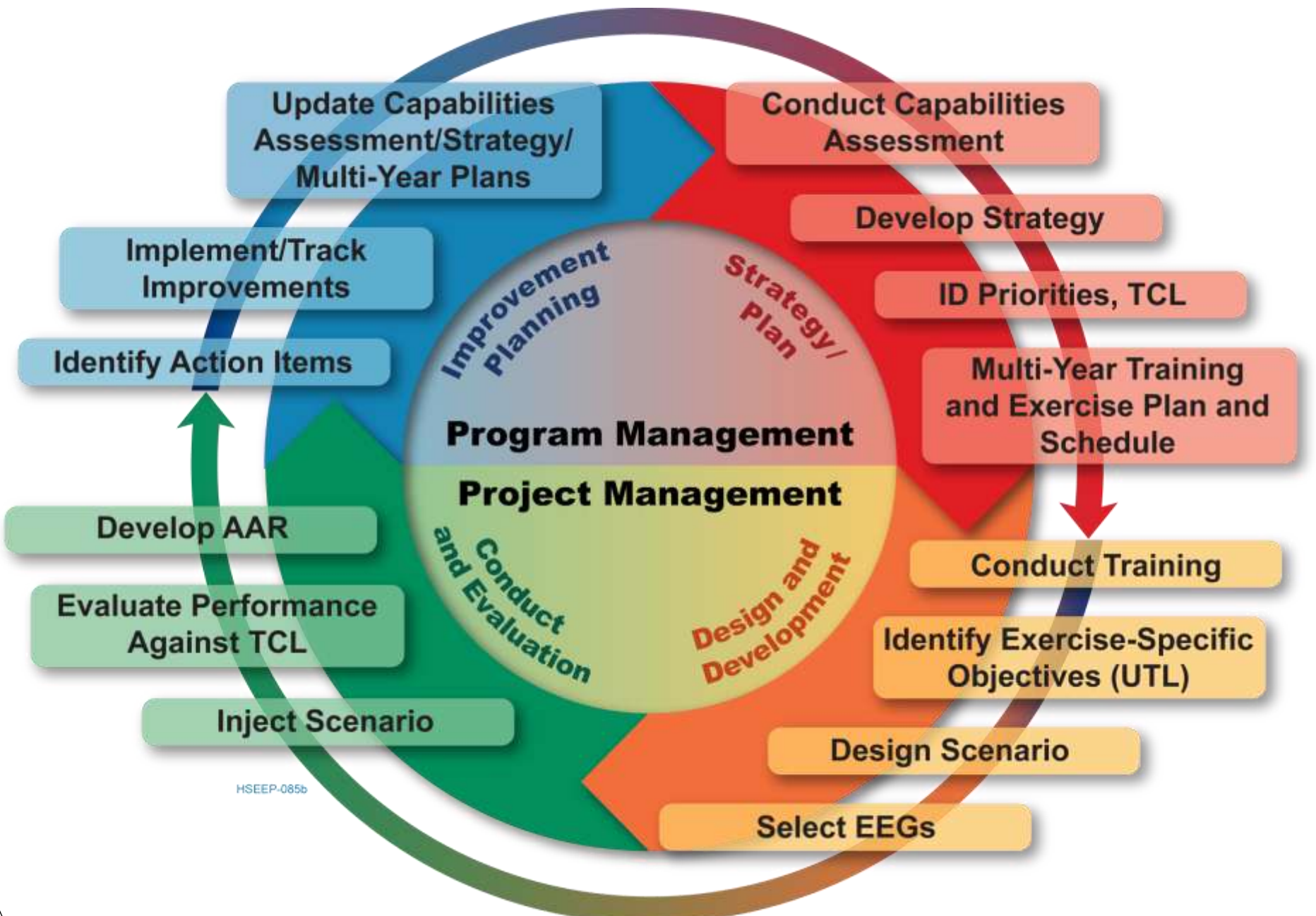
- Exercise philosophies and methodologies.
- Describe the purposes and characteristics of a functional exercise.
- Describe the steps in designing and conducting a functional exercise.
- Review documents that can be used to support functional exercises.
- Moving forward from functional exercises.

# HSEEP

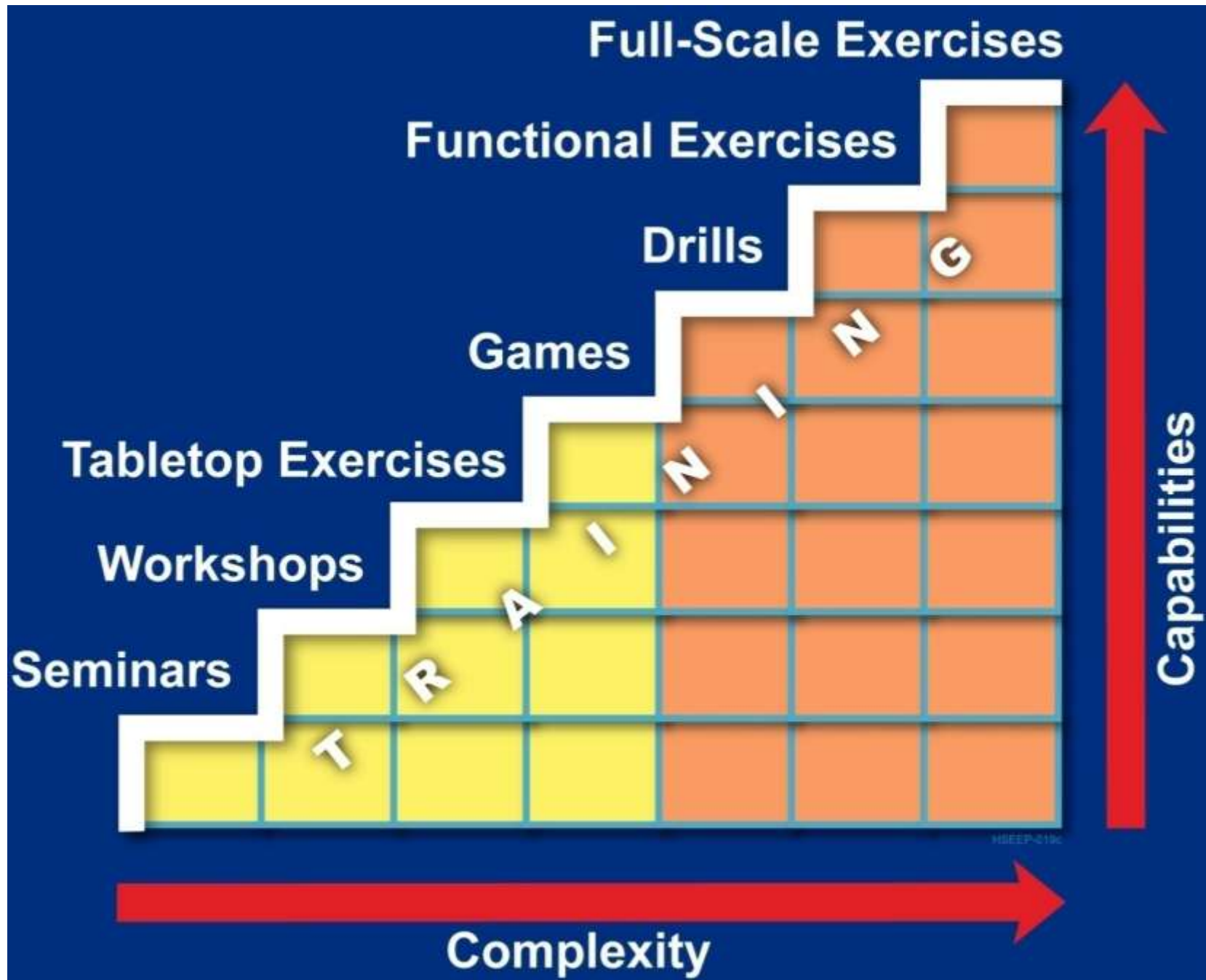
- HSEEP = Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program
- A nationally recognized methodology
- Adopted from federal, military and private sector exercise programs
- Established based upon best practices
- Common structure and terminology

# Progressive Exercising

- Broad commitment: Multiple groups involved in planning, preparation, and execution.
- Careful planning: Each exercise carefully planned to achieve identified goals.
- Increasing complexity: Increasingly complex exercises build on each other until mastery is achieved.



HSEEP-085b



# Full-Scale Exercises

Functional Exercises

Drills

Games

Tabletop Exercises

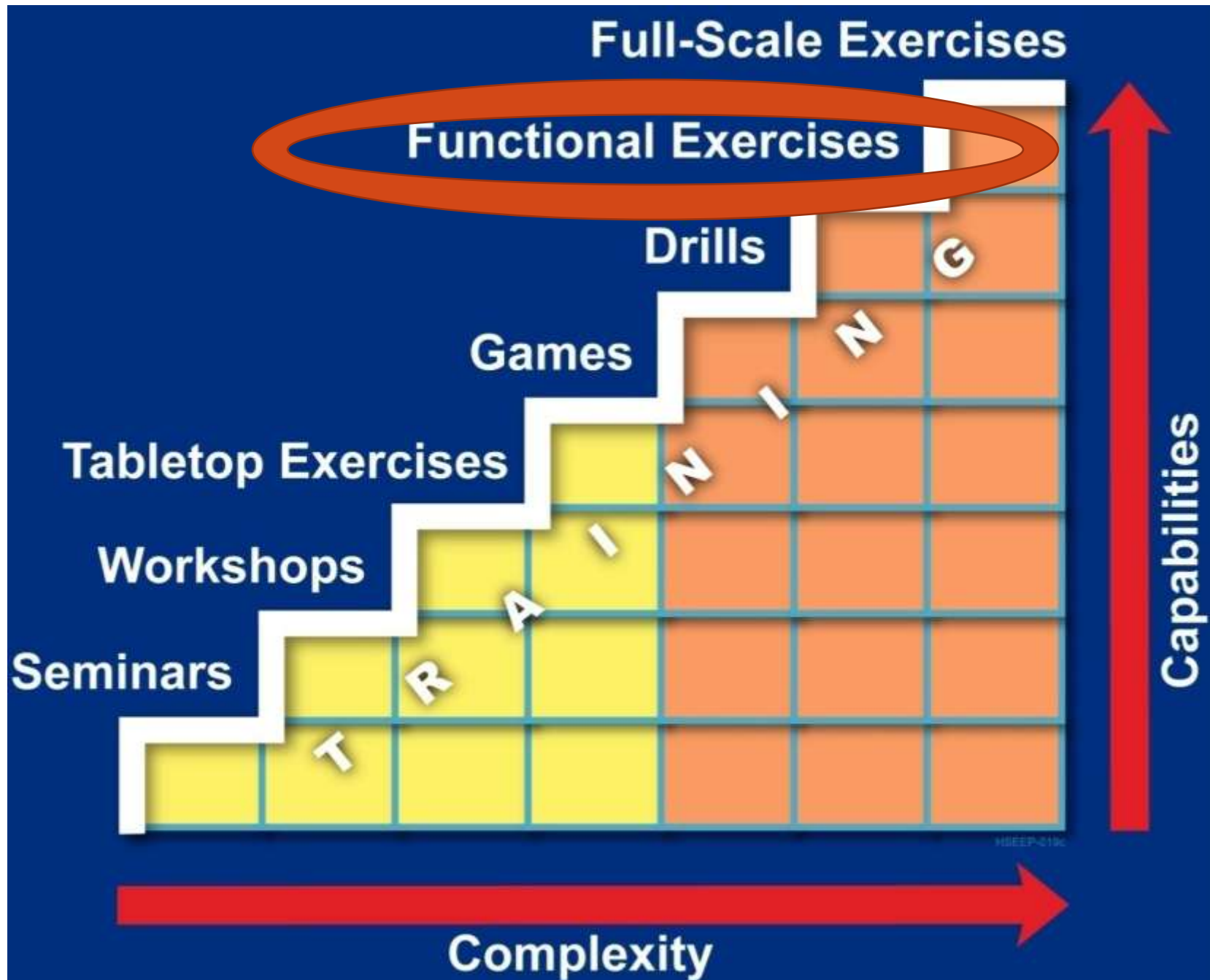
Workshops

Seminars

Capabilities

Complexity

HBEP-219C



# Goals and Objectives

- We start with goals not Scenarios
  - Goals will tell us the scenarios that fit our exercise.
  - If we start with the scenario we don't always fit in all of our goals.
- Example
  - Identify which staff will set up an alternate work site during a COOP event.
  - Identify IT connectivity gaps in our emergency plan.
  - Evaluate the plans to mobilize the coordination center during an emergency.

# The Functional Exercise

Operation Based

# The Functional Exercise

- Purpose: Test the capability of one or more functions in an emergency
- As realistic as possible without deploying actual resources
- Takes place in EOC or operations center



# Key Characteristics

## Format:

- Interactive—challenges entire emergency management system
- Involves controller(s), players, simulators, evaluators
- Stressful atmosphere
- Lengthy, complex
- Requires careful scripting, careful planning, attention to detail

# Key Characteristics

- It is geared for policy, coordination, and operations personnel.
- Players respond realistically to carefully planned and sequenced messages.
- Messages reflect events and problems.
- Players' decisions and actions:
  - Occur in real time.
  - Generate responses from other players.

# Best Uses

Assess:

- EM Direction and control.
- Adequacy of plans, policies, procedures, roles.
- Individual and system performance.
- Decision-making process.
- Communication and information sharing.
- Allocation of resources.
- Adequacy of resources.

# Participant Roles: Players

- The players are:
  - Operations center personnel—decision makers, coordination, operations.
- Duties:
  - Respond to messages as in a real emergency.
- Decisions and actions:
  - Take place in real time.
  - Generate real responses and consequences.

# Participant Roles: Simulators

- “Actors”—People who portray organizations that interact with the players
- Duties:
  - Deliver prescribed messages, ad lib spontaneous messages
  - Simulate actions taken by the organization (must implement all directives)
  - Inform controller of deviations



# Organizing Simulators

- How many?
  - At least one per organization represented in the operations center, plus some extras
- Group by function:
  - Nonparticipating government agencies
  - Participating organizations
  - Private or volunteer organizations and individuals

# Participant Roles: Controller

- Supervises the simulation, ensures exercise stays on track and objectives are reached
- Duties:
  - Training, orientation, and narrative
  - Monitor events, adjust when needed
  - Make decisions on unexpected actions
  - Maintain order and professionalism

# Participant Roles: Evaluators

- Role: Observe exercise progress, record and report observations.
- Duties:
  - Observe and record player actions.
  - Remain unobtrusive.
  - Evaluate achievement of objectives, identify problems, inform controller.
  - Document positive and negative observations.
  - Prepare written report.

# How It Works: Startup

- Beginning: Announced or “no notice”
- Briefing:
  - Overview of objectives
  - How exercise will proceed
  - Time period simulated
  - Ground rules
- Narrative: Verbal, TV, computer, slides, dramatized

# How It Works: Messages

- Messages may be presented on paper, by phone, by radio, in person.
  - Simulators communicate messages to players; players respond.
  - Players make requests; simulators respond.
- Messages are guided by MSEL.
- Success depends on simulating reality.



# How It Works: Realism

- Strive for realism.
- Encourage spontaneity:
  - Players need normal range of available responses.
  - Controllers, simulators need to “go with the flow” when situation calls for it.



# How It Works: Controlling Action

- Adjust scenario for spontaneous decisions.
- Adjust pace:
  - Adjust message flow.
  - Even pace among participants.
- Handle time skips.

# Time Skipping

- Allows multiple phases of an emergency in a short exercise
- Transitions planned to coincide with natural breaking points
- Controller presents transition updates
- Simulators update simulation displays

# Facilities and Materials

- Exercise where you operate.
- Provide:
  - Adequate space for players, simulators, evaluators, controller.
  - Needed equipment and materials: telephones, maps, displays, forms, etc.



# Designing a Functional Exercise

- Use the full 8-step process.
- Attend to the details:
  - Convincing narrative
  - Carefully chosen major and minor events
  - Realistic sequence
  - Expected actions closely tied to objectives
  - Many well-conceived messages (100 or more in a larger exercise)
  - Tightly constructed MSEL

# Unit Summary

- Reviewed how a functional exercise works.
- Discussed exercise roles.
- Examined how the design process is applied to functional exercises.
- Identified exercise responsibilities

**Next: The Full-Scale Exercise**

# Tools and Templates

- HSEEP/Exercise Design class
  - January 24-27 2012
  - October 16-19<sup>th</sup> 2012
- Iowa Homeland Security Emergency Management
  - <http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/>
- Local Emergency Management Professionals
- HSEEP website
  - <https://hseep.dhs.gov>
- Exercise document templates
  - [https://hseep.dhs.gov/hseep\\_Vols](https://hseep.dhs.gov/hseep_Vols)

# Thank You

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