

County and Hospital Exercise Designers Guide to Preparing for PandOrA Oregon's 2006 Statewide Pandemic Influenza Exercise

Toto, we aren't in Kansas anymore! Pandemic influenza has hit Oregon. The state-wide exercise name is PandOrA. Each response organization is responsible for a piece of this very large, proverbial, PandORa's box of trouble. A serious problem calls for a serious exercise and serious preparations. This full scale exercise is being conducted from 0900-1600 on November 1st and 2nd. Every organization and every local exercise design team will decide how much they will invest in PandOrA preparations and their time/date of participation. What follows are recommended steps for a serious level of preparation.¹ As a hospital or county/city designer of the exercise for your organization(s), you may use any or all of this material in helping to prepare your organization's participants. Best of luck!

The attached draft participant Handbook for Multnomah County has been adapted from the State Health Exercise Design Team's Participant Handbook that is oriented toward State participants and objectives. The State scenario includes region, county, hospital data summary of some pandemic influenza impacts. Such information for Multnomah County and metro Portland Health Region 1 hospitals are reflected in the attached Local Handbook. Other details in the handbook are aimed at participating organizations and individuals within Multnomah County. All other local/regional design teams may wish to adapt the handbook to their areas.

Preparing Participants. This is an exercise of a two day period during the second week of the pandemic's first sweep through Oregon. Exercise success depends upon each participant having good background knowledge of the scenario and his/her role, as if it were just another day of doing familiar tasks in an ongoing operation with familiar partner response organizations. Each organization's exercise design team needs to determine his/her organization's preparation and level of participation, and adapt actions, action parties, and due dates to his/her organization. Here is a proposed Action Plan to prepare the organization and its participants for PandOrA.

Action Plan

1. **Confirm dates and times of for organization's participation.** Non or part-time participating organizations will need to be simulated during exercise play. It is highly recommended that a skeleton or simulation staff play the role of or simulate that response organization during exercise hours that the organization's full incident management team is not activated. Simulation staff to present the role and actions of their organization to other response organizations, and properly brief the full team on the developing scenario, the response actions and decision of other participants, and the latest Incident Action Plan for their organization. *Share participation information with the Multnomah County/Hospital Exercise Design Team by September 14 so that the*

¹ Some participants will be familiar with the detailed Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program processes for designing, conducting, and evaluating an exercise. The attached participant handbook and the recommended steps below may not fully cover the HSEEP processes. However, employing these practical preparations will lead to a successful exercise.

PandORa Participant Preparation - Version 8/27

Handbook's table of Participating Organizations can be completed.

2. **Determine and schedule participants (participants and exercise staff), work locations, and roles.** *Assign roles, preparation guidelines, and ask that preparations be in collaborating with those who they will work with or who will work for them.*
3. **Determine exercise objectives/scope.** Where possible they should be common to several or all local response organizations. Note that Multnomah County's draft objectives focus on ICS/HEICS process and relationships in the response organization and between response organizations. The state exercise guidelines suggested areas of integration with State objectives. If possible include target capabilities (TCL) and universal task list (UTL) items that are appropriate to your exercise. *Include objectives/scope in your Handbook.*
4. **Develop your local and organization's scenario in consideration of the State's world, national, and state scenario and your organization's scope and objectives.** *Include these scenario details in your version of the Participants Handbook and reflect them in the Incident Action Plan that will be the operational template for your organization on November 1.*
5. **Develop a chronological list of major events** that you want to occur during the exercise in order to stimulate desired exercise objectives. **Then develop the messages** (aka MSEL or Master Sequence of Events List) that will be delivered to your command post or operation center. Ensure that these messages that are aligned with the Major Events and are sufficient to compel the response organization to attain exercise objectives. The Major Events List and MSEL are the only preparations in this document and the attached handbook that **should not** be shared in advance with exercise participants. They should be shared in advance with controllers, evaluators, simulators who need to prepare to present messages at scheduled times and evaluate desired actions that meet objectives.

Messages can be conveyed by the staff of a Simulation Cell, or more simply by exercise Controllers(s) handing or stating a message to a member of the response organization. Written messages are arranged chronologically and presented as scheduled. The message normally includes the source of the message and an explicit or implied action. Evaluators/controllers may improvise additional messages to encourage the desired action. Keep in mind that many messages in this state-wide exercise should be initiated by communications within *and* between response organizations.

Some messages are the 'noise' intended to add tension to the exercise and to ensure that the organization can process information, select, and respond to what is important. Be careful not to have so many 'noise' messages that the organization cannot effectively conduct processes and activities to attain desired objectives.

6. **Each Response Organization Should Develop an Incident Action Plan (IAP)** for the Operational Period that included exercise play on November 1. The basic IAP is comprised of: Objectives (ICS 202), Organization (ICS 203), Assignments for each Division/Group (ICS 204), Communications Plan (ICS 205 and phone lists), Medical Plans (ICS 206) and other special plans. Share these plans as you would expect them to

PandORa Participant Preparation - Version 8/27

be communicated between response organizations.

Multnomah County Health Department's exercise participants will develop this IAP as part of their preparation for the exercise. A series of participant workshops in September and October will correspond with the major steps of the ICS Planning Cycle, resulting in the completion of an IAP for the Operational Period that includes November 1. The November 1 response organizations will execute that IAP as they also conduct Planning Cycle steps to create a new IAP for the next Operational Period on November 2, and so on. An Advance Planning Unit of Planning will plan beyond that next Operational Period. [Note: In reality there would be at least a two week 'history' of many IAPs for each organization and many policy documents, however, it is not practical for design team or response organization to create this history in detail. Instead, they can create a summary of significant decisions and actions since the initial activation of the response organization.]

7. **Populate Data-based and Web-based Applications** with data that reflects the situation on November 1st for your response organization(s). Establish and train participants on those applications and protocols so they are able to use and input information pertaining to those applications. State Public Health may propose certain protocols by the end of September. Response organizations should adopt or adapt these protocols in addition to establishing their own.
8. **Complete your Participant Handbook and Incident Action Plan (IAP)** and share it with appropriate participants and partner response organizations before the exercise. **Both** the Participant Handbook and IAP should be understood by all exercise participants, and should be used as training tools for preparing participants.
9. **Identify and complete support details.** Ensure that it is clear which exercise staff and players are responsible for what real and simulated details. For example, the exercise Logistics function may identify a food vendor (and obtain funding) to feed exercise players and staff, or this may be a detail that is arranged in advance by exercise staff. Similarly, the exercise public information officer (PIO) might work with the media, or you may have a non-participating PIO working with the media.
10. **Complete a Handbook addendum for Exercise Staff** (simulators, evaluators, and controllers). Schedule, distribute to, and brief all exercise staff on their roles well before the start of the exercise. This is an addendum to the information found in the Participants Handbook. Added materials include exercise staff identification and roles, communications between exercise staff, a major events list or chart of the major changes of scenario occurring during the exercise, and the messages or Master Sequence List of Events that exercise staff will inject and evaluate to encourage that those exercised accomplish exercise objectives.
11. **Prepare participants for the exercise.** Schedule and conduct trainings that include the handbook, the most current IAP, ICS/HEIC refresher training, and ICP/EOC familiarity, organization, and processes review. Review past After Action Reports (AAR) and train in an effort to correct shortfalls. Possible training might include taking FEMA Incident Command System (ICS) distance courses through fema.gov. The new IC-703 Resource Management course offers an overview of this critical component of

PandORa Participant Preparation - Version 8/27

ICS, and requires only about 3 self-paced hours of time commitment. In addition, it may be helpful to provide ICS/HEICS position checklists and delegate detailed preparations to functional team leaders (i.e. assigned Logistics Section Team leads a training session or workshop for all logistics staff.). A recently published ICS book titled 'Beyond Initial Response' (Deal et al., 2006) is a superb review aid and reference for ICS tools suitable for a prolonged, complex response. This book costs about thirty-two dollars at the online Barnes and Noble website. Multnomah County Health has procured fifty copies for key Incident Management Team members.

12. **Establish the exercise facility as part of the preparation efforts for exercise participants.** Command and General Staff along with other leaders, should work with their assigned exercise staff to design and set up the command post, operations center, or field activity in a manner that reflects ICS roles, established plans and policies, the scenario, and relations with various other response organizations. These efforts can be planned in briefings and workshops well before the start of the exercise, while the facility might not be set up until the day before. Some preparations might include:
 - a) **signage** to reflect ICS/HICS work locations;
 - b) **ICS vests** draped over chairs in appropriate work areas, labeled with position names;
 - c) **Situation Status Boards** that include the current IAP, maps, and relationships between response organizations;
 - d) **Resources Unit displays**, such as T-cards, for all resources of the response organization that would have been checked in;
 - e) **Communications Unit equipment assignment cards** (e.g. radios, laptops);
 - f) **PIO area** that includes main and special communication messages, channels to targets communities, etc.;
 - g) **Supply Unit that includes a well understood resource ordering process** that that adapt to partner external organization ordering processes as well as internal processes. Provide some documented ordering history to be followed up with and built upon; and
 - h) **Draft and share Incident Commander or Emergency Operations Center (EOC) Director/Manager expectations** of Command and General Staff, along with this handbook, the IAP for the current Operational Period, and a general plan for future Operational Periods.