



Joining Instructions

NBRT Exercise Network

1.1 Background

Control centres are established during the initial stages of a biosecurity emergency response to facilitate coordination and management. Traditionally, this has involved setting up physical facilities with the necessary resources and IT infrastructure such that response personnel are co-located. While this approach of physical co-location has its advantages, it has not been a viable option in light of COVID-19.

To accommodate the changes to the response environment imposed by COVID-19 (e.g., social distancing; mass movement to working-from-home arrangements; restricted travel), jurisdictions have adopted the use of virtual control centres. Feedback amongst biosecurity emergency response stakeholders have indicated that the transition from physical to virtual control centres has been relatively smooth, with much of the IT systems having been introduced previously as staff started to work from home. This being said, the rapid introduction of virtual control centres has meant that there has not been a chance to carefully consider the nuances of a virtual control centre.

This exercise offers an opportunity for the NBRT program to explore said nuances with jurisdictional response personnel.



1.2 Exercise Need

This exercise is developed and delivered within the Microsoft (MS) Teams online environment. Deploying virtual control centres was initially adopted as a workaround due to the current COVID-19 pandemic but has proved to be a valuable resource. This exercise will provide an opportunity for the MS Teams capability to be further tested and its performance assessed against the needs of the NBRT. The outcomes of the exercise will inform future development of the NBRT virtual incident management processes and enhanced capability.

This exercise is designed to meet the needs of NBRT preparedness, staff development in incident management, continuous improvement in people, processes and technology and agility through development of online incident management arrangements.

1.3 Aim and objectives

The *aim* of this exercise is to enhance preparedness of the NBRT to respond in a virtual control centre.

The following objectives have been set to achieve this aim:

- a. Analyse needs, gaps and challenges for NBRT members managing a biosecurity emergency response in a virtual control centre.
- b. Formalise and test virtual control centre operating protocols.
- c. Build the capabilities of the NBRT members operating/deployed into in a virtual incident management environment.

1.4 Scope

The exercise focus is at the NBRT level and covers Incident Management, Planning, Operations, Logistics and, Public Information. The systems included in this exercise are MS Teams, Microsoft Office Suite and GovTEAMS.

To prevent technical challenges during the exercise, the use of specialised systems is excluded.

1.5 Philosophy of this exercise

This exercise will be innovative by using a virtual platform, but also by how it applies to various scenario-based activities.

The setting will include biosecurity-related scenario/s relating to plant and animal disease and other relevant disaster/emergency incidents hazards.

There are several motivators for utilising this format. These include:

- a. The participants of this exercise include multi-jurisdictional, multi-disciplined representatives. This format will ensure the exercise remains equally engaging for all.
- b. NBRT members are deployed to control centres across Australia and should be able to respond to any hazard (all-hazards proficient). The structure and processes within incident management are the same, irrespective of the specific event. This exercise will focus on the process and how to coordinate and manage various tasks virtually.
- c. An additional benefit of this approach is to raise awareness of NBRT members of the implications/considerations of a multitude of emergency events. This will bolster the 'all hazards' response proficiency.

We ask you to open your mind to the concept and enjoy the learning experience.

1.6 Technology

For this exercise the collaboration platform will be MS Teams (accessed via GovTEAMS).

The structure of the Virtual Control Centre will be as follows:

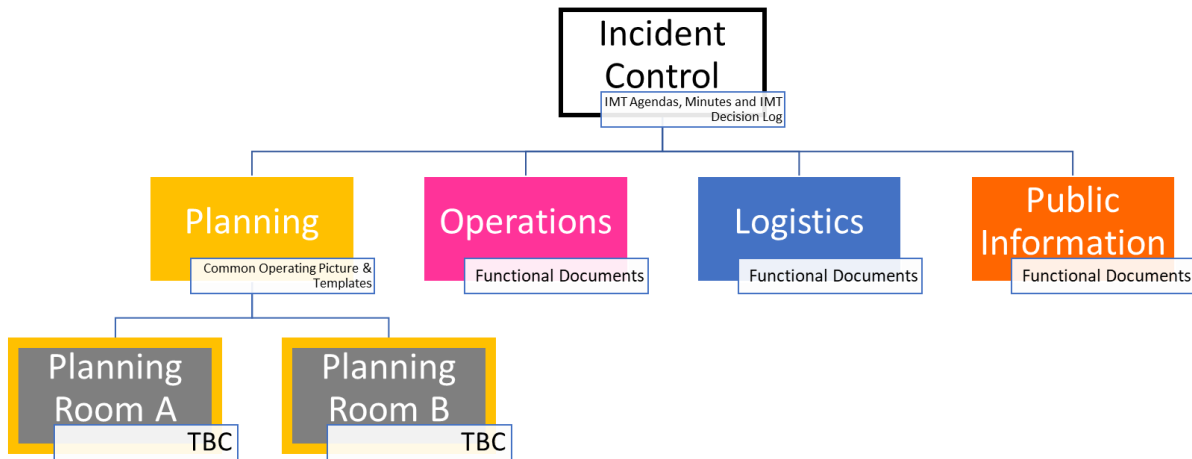


Fig. 1 VCC structure

For ease of use, we recommend that participants:

- Join by transitioning into the GovTEAMS environment and join the meeting by clicking the 'Join' button in the Incident Management channel
- Join from a location with minimal background noise and disruptions as they will be participating in online meetings during the exercise.
- Notify absence/break/local disruption to your direct report.
- Leave their camera on unless a technical reason prevents them from doing so.
- Use a headset (if available).

For technical support please contact:

Nichole Dash-Greentree
Nicole.dash-greentree@awe.gov.au
02 6272 4017
0424 395 065

Karly O'Neill
Karly.ONeill@daf.qld.gov.au
0436 670 800

Additional technical support contacts, as well as dedicated channel for technical support in the exercise environment, will be made available during exercise conduct.

1.7 Records

In emergency management, it is critical that records are kept of actions and decisions. MS Teams has the ability to record meetings and we intend to record the meetings where possible. This will be managed by the Mentors/EXCON.

All records developed during the exercise by participants must be stored within the file structures created in the Exercise Network MS Teams environment.

1.8 How to participate

All participants have confirmed access during the Exercise Network Training and Briefing session on 28 May. This will allow you to enter the virtual control centre on your own initiative.

To ensure full access to the MS team environment all participants need to join the exercise meetings via the NBRT – Virtual Control Centre Exercise GovTEAMS site (either on the web browser or via your Teams app), **not via your calendar invite**.

Refer to the MS team guide for assistance on accessing GovTEAMS and how to join a meeting.

- Section 2.1 - logging into your GovTEAMS account.
- Section 4.1 – join an existing meeting.

If you have not arranged access or are experiencing technical difficulties, please contact technical support as soon as possible.

1.9 Starting and completion times

| DATE | SESSION # | TIME (AEST) |
|--------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Tuesday, 15 June | 1 | 10:30-12:30 |
| Wednesday, 16 June | 2 | 10:30-12:30 |
| | 3 | 14:30-16:30 |
| Thursday, 17 June | 4 | 10:30-12:30 |
| Friday, 18 June | 5 | 10:30-12:30 |
| | 6 | 14:30-16:30 |

1.10 Exercise structure

The structure of the exercise has been outlined in the tables below. Sessions 1-3 is targeted at the Incident Manager and mentor cohorts of the NBRT. Sessions 4-6 is targeted at all NBRT members. As mentioned, NBRT members are expected to have participated in the Exercise Training and Briefing session (28 May) prior to the exercise.

NBRT Exercise Network – Joining Instructions

| Segment | Session 1 - | Session 2 - | Session 3 - |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Introduction/Induction/Recap | 20 mins | 10 mins | 10 mins |
| Process and practice refresher: presentation/guest speaker/mentor | 20 mins | 20 mins | 20 mins |
| Scenario introduction | 5 mins | 5 mins | 5 mins |
| Execute tasks | 45 mins | 55 mins | 50 mins |
| Brief back | 20 mins | 20 mins | 15 mins |
| Debrief | 10 mins | 10 mins | 20 mins |
| Total | 120 mins | 120 mins | 120 mins |
| Topics | Deployment and setting up the IMT | Situational awareness, Common Operating Picture, operational tempo | Multi agency coordination, liaison, safety management |

| Segment | Session 4 - | Session 5 – | Session 6 - |
|---|---|-----------------|--|
| Introduction/Induction/Recap | 20 mins | 10 mins | 10 mins |
| Process and practice refresher: presentation/guest speaker/mentor | 20 mins | 20 mins | 20 mins |
| Scenario introduction | 5 mins | 5 mins | 5 mins |
| Execute tasks | 45 mins | 55 mins | 50 mins |
| Brief back | 20 mins | 20 mins | 15 mins |
| Debrief | 10 mins | 10 mins | 20 mins |
| Total | 120 mins | 120 mins | 120 mins |
| Topics | Activation, mobilisation, Set up, Induction | Planning Cycle | Stakeholder engagement Communication and Coordination between functions Multi agency coordination Briefings |

1.11 Pre-exercise work

Participants are required to have registered an account with GovTEAMS to gain access to the MS Teams environment for the exercise prior to 28 May. Technical support should be contacted in any technical/access difficulties are encountered.

The Virtual Control Centre Operating Protocols will be issued to you prior to the exercise, and it is recommended you familiarise yourself with them.

1.12 Resource requirements

The following resources are recommended for successful participation in the training exercise:

- Suitable working station
- Laptop/computer and it is highly recommended to have an additional screen
- Reliable, fast internet connection
- Headphones
- Camera
- Access to relevant documents and procedures including how to instructions
- Opportunity to make notes
- A positive attitude!

1.13 Safety

The exercise is to provide a constructive and supportive environment for learning. Everyone is to respect the contributions of others.

In a scenario-based training event, it can be difficult for participants to differentiate between real and pretend emergencies. For this reason, we use a catch phrase that is used to indicate when we are 'stepping out' of the exercise/scenario and communicating 'in real life'. For a real emergency that requires assistance, the phrase will be "NO DUFF". This will apply to accidents, emergencies and real-life events. Any issues should be brought to the attention of the Safety Officer, Exercise Control (EXCON) Team and/or Mentors immediately. If the exercise scenario causes distress in any way, please report this.

When you work remotely you must manage your own working environment. Please ensure you have a suitable working station and access to food and water. Also make sure you adjust your posture, as it is easy to get cramped shoulders and a headache from monitoring all the various information flows on the screens.

If there is any issue, disruption, challenge in your local environment please contact the Safety Officer to inform them of your situation. Equally, if you feel frustrated or overwhelmed contact the Safety Officer.

Kirsty Piper

kpiper@animalhealthaustralia.com.au

02 6203 3931

1.14 Exercise support

For sessions 4-6 Mentors are allocated to each channel. Their responsibility is to assist and guide when needed to ensure the focus remains on the incident management process and testing the protocols.

1.15 Evaluation

Your active participation and contribution are invaluable for the success of this exercise. Improvement opportunities will be identified through:

- Observations
- Exercise participant Logs – will be provided via email
- Exercise Feedback forms – the link will be provided during the last exercise session
- Hot Debrief

1.16 Assistance

If you require assistance with any part of this joining instruction, please contact:

Yuta Himura
NBRT@animalhealthaustralia.com.au
02 6203 3927
0435 542 143

1.17 Key contacts

Contact point mentioned in this document have been listed below. Should you have any questions, issues or concerns, please contact the relevant individual. Additional support and contact points (e.g., ExCon members) will be identified during the exercise.

| ROLE | NAME | PHONE | EMAIL |
|-----------------|-----------------------|--------------|--|
| Tech support | Nicole Dash-Greentree | 02 6272 4017 | nicole.dash-greentree@awe.gov.au |
| Tech support | Karly O'Neill | 0436 670 800 | Karly.ONeill@daf.qld.gov.au |
| Safety Officer | Kristy Piper | 02 6203 3931 | kpiper@animalhealthaustralia.com.au |
| General support | Yuta Himura | 02 6203 3927 | NBRT@animalhealthaustralia.com.au |