TERA

TRANSPORTATION EMERGENCY RESPONSE APPLICATION

Trainer's Guide

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This manual explains the Transit Emergency Response Application (TERA) software and its practical applications for exercising emergency response personnel. It provides limited guidance to the reader on how to coordinate and administer a functional or tabletop exercise using TERA.

This manual covers all aspects of TERA exercise facilitation, including:

- TERA overview and operation
- Preparing for an exercise
- Administering an exercise
- Conducting an After Action Review (AAR)

1. Introduction

1.1 Definition and Purpose

TERA is a simulation-based training system that allows individuals or teams to make decisions in realistic situations and see the outcomes. TERA is completely web-based with no software install; the user needs only a broadband connection and Java-enabled browser such as *Internet Explorer* to join an exercise. Each exercise scenario presents the unfolding incident through realistic injects including email, news videos, website articles, and simulated phone calls. Users make decisions and mitigate the incident by responding to messages, communicating with teammates, and giving commands to simulated entities.

TERA is part of the Emergency Management Staff Trainer (EMST) family of trainers. EMST has been used to exercise *National Guard Joint Operations Center Staff*, and *State and Local Emergency Operations Center Personnel,* among others.

Research reveals that experience plays a central role in making effective decisions, especially during critical situations. TERA exercises build a pattern base that allow decision makers to better make recognition based decisions when real world challenges arise. TERA offers progressive training, from acquisition of knowledge through informational presentations, to building of skills in an individual role trainer with simulated teammates, to formulating abilities by exercising with a team in a real-world environment.

Figure 1. TERA scales from an individual up to multiple organizations exercising together.

Concrete feedback is required to build expertise. Each role is assessed on taking the steps to complete cognitive tasks such as keeping control of the scene, communicating both within the team and with outside agencies, and utilizing resources. Responsibilities may overlap between team members; the assessment reveals how team members work together to achieve overall goals.

TERA exercises are accessed through a web portal. The user logs in to run an individual exercise scenario to join a scheduled team exercise, take a tutorial, or access training records. If the user selects a “novice” skill level, TERA will display task prompts that lead the user through the exercise. Because TERA is web based, teams do not need to be in the same geographic location. They can exercise together sitting at their desks, from across the country – anywhere there is a broadband connection.

TERA was funded by the National Guard Bureau (NGB) and is free for use by qualified emergency management agencies.

1.2 Overview

The TERA system consists of the following major sections. Each section is accessible via the Portal left-hand navigator.

Tutorials: TERA provides tutorials on use of the TERA system, and computer based training for many of the player roles. The role tutorials expose novice trainees to the basic concepts and shared vocabulary of the domain, and go over common tasks that they will be expected to perform during an emergency incident.

Individual Exercise: In the Individual Exercise, the trainee learns his role while working with simulated teammates. The trainee can start building his repertoire of previous experience through individual computer-based simulation. The trainee may try different roles in the simulation in order to gain an understanding of the responsibilities of other team members.

Staff Exercise: Once trainees understand their role and the tasks expected of them, they may come together as a team to execute their roles in a collective simulation-based exercise. During this time, they should learn something about each other's roles, abilities, responsibilities, and lines of communication. Once they have practiced these skills to become a cohesive team, they can concentrate on the decision challenges facing the team as a whole.

After Action Report (AAR): TERA automatically tracks trainee actions and provides an After Action Report. The AAR can be accessed either directly from the pop-up box at the end of an exercise, or via the Exercise Records page.

2. Implementing TERA in your Organization

2.1 Staff Exercise Configurations

TERA can be presented as either a functional or a tabletop exercise.

In a Tabletop exercise, TERA is used as a discussion driver. For larger audiences, participants may be divided into role groups. The TERA interface for a group's roles is projected on a screen and the simulation messages are used to drive discussions. The projected computers will need speakers so the participants can listen to any TV news injects. As participants discuss the scenario and decide what actions to take, their decisions are entered into TERA. The tabletop scenario should be paused where necessary to allow time for discussion.

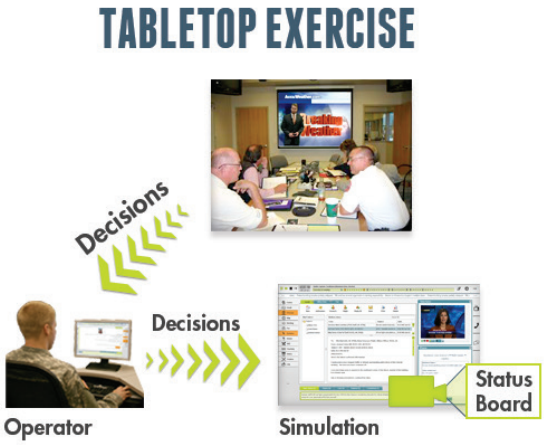


Figure 2. TERA Tabletop exercise configuration.

In a functional exercise, as many roles as possible should be assigned to live players. When there is more than one player for a role, the trainer may configure the training one of two ways:

- Each player may have a computer and share the role's tasks. This configuration emphasizes communication within the role's team, to ensure that all tasks are addressed and the team coordinates to avoid duplication of effort. This is appropriate for an exercise where the participants are geographically distributed.

- There may be one computer for the role, with one player acting as the computer operator to receive information and enter decisions, while the other player(s) coordinate face-to-face with other roles. This configuration emphasizes coordination and relationships between the different roles. This can be especially useful for a junior/senior pairing, or instances where the role team may not often have the opportunity to work together, such as day and night shifts. This is appropriate for an exercise where the participants are located in one facility.

A functional exercise may be executed by a single organization, such as a State EOC or JFHQ, or for

multiple organizations. Each organization will have their own After Action Report.

Figure 3. TERA supports multi-organization exercises.

2.2 Preparation

A TERA exercise can vary in scope from an individual working on their own, to a few team members executing a staff exercise during their free time, to a large multi-organization event. For the larger events, the greatest challenge to the success of a TERA exercise is the amount of coordination required. The exercising organizations will be investing a great deal of time and money in staging the exercise. Local media may be interested in covering the event. It is the *Exercise Facilitator's* responsibility to make sure everything runs smoothly.

Key Personnel

The personnel required will vary with the scope of the exercise and the comfort level of the participants with the TERA interface.

Exercise Facilitator: For each exercise, there is an *Exercise Facilitator*, who acts as the lead trainer and liaison with the exercising organization. He/she is responsible for the flow of the event.

Exercise Controller: The *Exercise Controller* is responsible for running and monitoring the exercise. Ordinarily it will be the *Exercise Facilitator*, but the responsibility may be delegated if the *Exercise Facilitator* is engaged with observers, VIPs, media, etc. He/She should personally test all equipment and run a brief practice scenario to make sure everything is in working order prior to the start of the training or exercise.

TERA Support Trainers: For very large scale exercises, there should be several *TERA Support Trainers* available to provide hands-on assistance to the participants. The participants may be nervous about having to learn the "game" and be tested on it. It is very important to have enough *TERA Support Trainers* to create a comfort zone that allows participants to concentrate on the decisions to be made

rather than their computer interface. The recommended minimum number of *TERA Support Trainers* is 1 per 10 novice participants, less if the participants are comfortable with the TERA exercise interface.

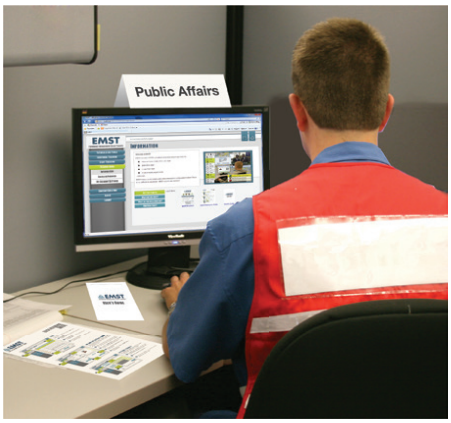
Preparing the Participants

In order to receive the most benefit from a Staff Exercise, participants should be familiar with their own role in the organization, and with the National Incident Management Plan and Incident Command System. For civilian emergency management organizations, novice participants should be encouraged to complete the FEMA on-line training course(s) that are most pertinent to their role. National Guard JFHQ novice participants should be encouraged to complete FEMA Independent Study Program *IS-100.b - (ICS 100) Introduction to Incident Command System*, as well as the TERA Job Tutorial for their role. Participants may also practice their role in TERA Individual Exercises so they are familiar with the TERA interface and tasking prior to the staff exercise.

By using TERA simulations along with their normal, *Standard Operating Procedures* (SOPs), participants will be better prepared for a real life incident. The participants should be encouraged to bring to a staff exercise any materials or job aids that they would normally use to handle a real incident. Examples include such items as radios, equipment logs, forms, SOPs, Field Operation Guides (FOGs), and checklists. References such as chem-bio handbooks, HazMat Guides, uniforms, and identification vests or name tags are also helpful. The participants should also be encouraged to use reach back capabilities. An example of this would be the Public Health roleplayer calling co-workers in their office to identify a hazardous material by the symptoms described in the scenario.

All role player participants will need an activated TERA account. If the participants do not have email addresses ending in .mil or .gov, be sure to allow several days for account activation. The participant will need to access his or her email in order to get the password to log in for the first time. If they will not have email access at the exercise site, be sure that all participants have obtained their account and changed their password to something they can remember before attending the exercise.

Equipment and Facilities



At a minimum, each assigned role player and facilitator will require a computer station to run the TERA exercise interface. Required equipment will depend on the exercise configuration. For distributed exercises where participants will utilize the *Voice Over IP* (VOIP) capability, each participant will need a headset with a microphone. The headset should be tested with TERA prior to joining the exercise to ensure it is set up correctly.

For co-located participants, it is useful to project the TERA interface in the exercise room. This will enhance the realism

of the experience by allowing the team to project meeting slides and hold shift change briefs or status updates as a group. The projected computer should have speakers for playing the TV news clips. There should be bulletin board or easel space available for posting Incident Action Plans (IAPs), maps, and other exercise aids.

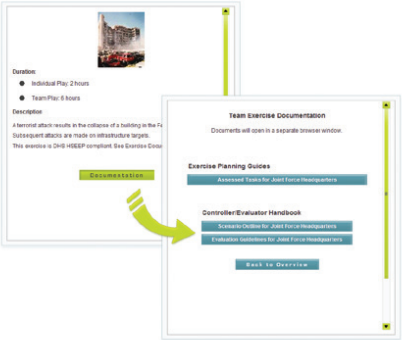
If the participants are not used to working as a team or are not playing their normally assigned roles, it can be useful to have placards identifying the role at each computer station. In addition, if participants are not familiar with TERA, each computer station should have a printed TERA Quick Reference Guide and User's Guide.

2.3 Scheduling the Exercise

See the *TERA User's Guide* for instructions on scheduling the exercise.

TERA may be operated in one of three skill levels. All skill levels result in automated assessment of the participant actions. Novice and Intermediate skill levels show task prompts. The Expert skill level does not show task prompts.

When scheduling a geographically co-located team exercise, include one Host with no other role assignments. This will provide an extra TERA exercise interface station that can be projected for use during briefings and to show the TV news injects. A second Host station can also be useful for monitoring the assessment status on a monitor that is not projected.



Scenario assessment documentation is available from the staff exercise scheduler. Select the organization and scenario and click the "Documentation" button on the scenario description pane. When exercising at the Expert skill level, the Facilitator may find the Evaluation Guidelines document useful in assisting participants as needed.

If scheduling a multi-organization exercise, there are a few things to keep in mind:

- The first organization scheduled will be the lead organization. The hosts for this exercise will be responsible for starting and controlling the exercise for all organizations.
- If you assign one participant roles in multiple organizations, he or she will have to log in with a separate browser window for each organization.
- You can send a reminder email to the exercise participants from the summary page. The email

is only for the displayed organization's participants. To send email to all exercise participants, you will need to send it from each organization's summary page. After scheduling the exercise, you can reach the summary page from Modify an Exercise – Details.

2.4 Executing the Exercise

Ideally, participants will be familiar with TERA prior to a large exercise event. If not, allocate a half hour at the beginning of the event schedule to allow the participants to work through the *Learn the Interface* scenario either individually or as a team. In the *Learn the Interface* scenario, messages are sent to participants instructing them on how to take actions that are important for their role. It is designed so that if the trainee follows the instructions properly, the assessment results will be all **green**. The scenario should run for about fifteen minutes, or until the users feel comfortable with the system. The *Exercise Controller* should keep a close eye on the assessment summary in the Gradebook to see who is having trouble and assign support trainers to help. To increase the comfort level of the novice participants, also provide a printed copy of the *TERA Quick Reference Guide* and *TERA User's Guide* at each computer station.

Figure 4. In a co-located exercise, small teams can work together to execute a role.

Under normal conditions the exercise moves at a rapid pace as events unfold. It can be difficult for a single person with the messages appearing in the exercise interface, input responses and actions, and still talk to peers and make command decisions. In a large scale co-located exercise, ideally, all assessed roles will have at least two to three participants working together at a single player station. One participant takes the command role, interacting with other players face to face as they would at an actual incident site or within the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The second participant, ideally someone with computer experience, monitors the message traffic from the simulation and ensures that all command decisions are entered into the system for assessment. If a third participant is available; he/she can track issues and logistics using the jurisdiction's normal methods, such as a paper logbook. Suggestions for role groupings are a senior commander with junior support, city and county EOC counterparts, or day and night shift personnel from one role who can switch off taking the lead in different exercise runs.

The *Exercise Facilitator* and *Exercise Controller* should be familiar with the scenario to be exercised including the scenario outline. The outline can be found with the scenario documentation in the scenario description pane of the staff exercise scheduler. It should be kept at "close hold" and should not be shared with the trainees/participants. Either the *Exercise Facilitator* or a designated Subject Matter Expert should be available to assume any simulated roles during briefings and meetings.

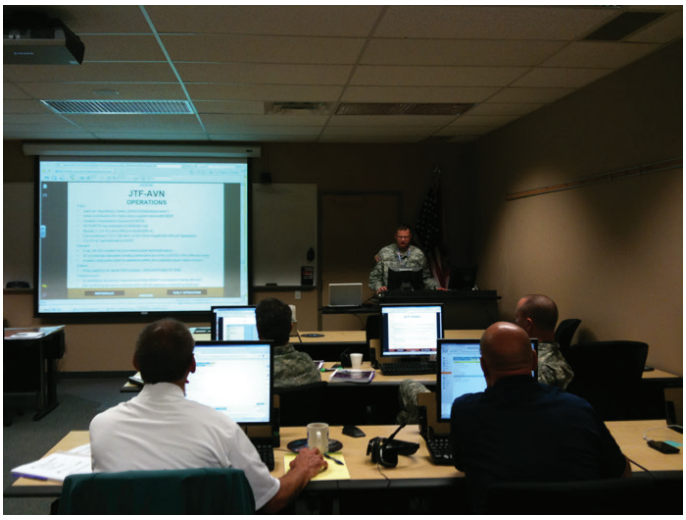


Figure 5. The Exercise Facilitator or a designated SME should be familiar with the scenario and prepared to assume the roles of any simulated players in a briefing.

The exercise should be monitored by the *Exercise Controller* to ensure an even pace. Many scenarios play out over several simulated days and require the Exercise Controller to move forward from one exercise event to the next. Forwarding to the next exercise event may be initiated any time after all scripted scenario events have played out. TERA has flexibility for time management. The *Exercise Controller* can manipulate the "exercise pace" through the expanded VCR controls in the upper left-hand corner of the facilitator's interface. The Exercise Controller should allow ample time for all players to meet objectives, but not so much that advanced learners become bored or distracted.

During the exercise, the *Exercise Controller* should monitor the assessment summary in the Gradebook to identify the trainees that may be having problems. The *Exercise Facilitator* or *TERA Support Trainers* should determine if the trainee is having trouble interfacing with the software or just isn't sure what actions to take to mitigate the situation. The Exercise Facilitator and TERA Support Trainers should identify who is having the most trouble and assign support trainers to give them additional attention during the exercises. If necessary, the support personnel can encourage the players to think about actions they have not yet taken, but should soon.

2.5 Facilitating the After Action Review

The TERA ability to conduct immediate assessment is an advantage in comparison to traditional paper or tabletop exercises. Typically, live exercises require several human observer/controllers to prompt and evaluate player actions. The evaluation team must then coordinate a meeting to review and compare notes, validate findings, and, finally, generate and distribute a report. The entire process may take several days or even weeks. TERA contains a comprehensive *After Action Report (AAR)* that allows the team to examine both automated and self-assessed evaluation criteria immediately after exercise completion.

With assistance from the *Exercise Facilitator,* the *AAR* can be used as a driver for discussion by a representative of the exercising organization. Review the properties of the *AAR* with the organization's senior exercise leader (i.e.: the Emergency Manager) or the *Event POC* and encourage him/her to lead the review with the exercise participants. A recommended outline for the AAR session follows:

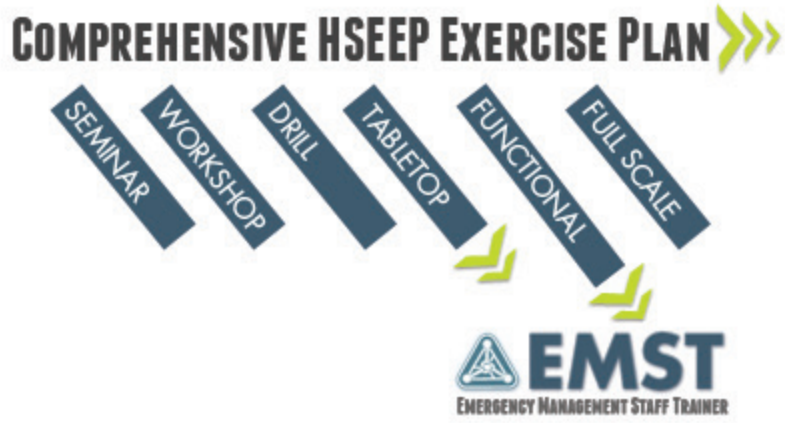
- Review the broad objectives of the exercise/training event

- AAR leader solicits feedback from representatives of each role
  - Maintain a balance between positive and negative
  - Place emphasis on performance and response, not the scenario itself. The participants will have an opportunity to critique the scenario in a customer survey following the AAR.
- Pass out Exercise Critique/Customer Survey Forms

3. Find Support for Conducting TERA Exercises

The Department of Homeland Security has released the new National Response Plan (NRP) dated December 2004. The NRP requires agencies at all levels to develop response plans that reflect concepts described in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) which includes the Incident Command System. TERA provides a method for jurisdictions to exercise and assess their Incident Action Plans using many of the threat scenarios identified in the NRP.

Grants for conducting exercises in your jurisdiction can be obtained through the Department of Homeland Security's Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP). Exercises funded through ODP must comply with the Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP). TERA can fulfill the tabletop and functional exercise requirements in a comprehensive HSEEP exercise plan.



The National Guard Bureau J-7, Exercises, Assessment, and Training Division stands ready to assist any jurisdiction with a desire to utilize TERA to improve their emergency response and preparedness procedures.

Key information:

FEMA Grant Information

- http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/index.shtm

Appendix A. Multi-Organization Event Preparation

A.1 Training and Assessment Schedule

Training and Assessment Schedule: The training and assessment schedule recommended in Table 3.1 is for a two day training event with two separate exercises and AARs.

Table 3.1. Sample Training Schedule

Day	Time	Scheduled Exercise Event
Monday	All Day	Facilitators and Support Trainers Travel Day
Tuesday	Morning	Faciliators and Support Trainers Exercise Planning
	Afternoon	Final Planning Conference, site setup, in-brief
Wednesday	Morning	Training: Overview, user training scenarios
	Afternoon	Training: Scenario 1, AAR
Thursday	Morning	Training: Scenario 2
	Afternoon	Training: Scenario 2 AAR, exercise hot wash, out-brief
NOTE:	*Monday & Friday*	*Recommended Travel Days*

A setup day is built into the schedule to give the *Exercise Facilitator* and *TERA Support Trainers* time to meet and complete final coordination and setup. Depending on the experience of the support team, this is a good opportunity to have the *TERA Support Trainers* play through a practice scenario. The *Exercise Facilitator* should make sure that the overhead projectors are tested with the displays they are to project and that all handouts are printed and prepared.

The first training morning should be used to present an overview of the TERA program, a review of domain information such as the Incident Command System or JOC roles and responsibilities, and familiarization training on the TERA interface. Participants should also ensure that they have copies of any resources they may wish to use in the exercise such as plans, SOPs, forms, briefing templates, or handbooks.

Ask the *Event POC* to assign the roles the participants will be playing during the afternoon's exercise. Distribute and review any player materials with the trainees. The morning session is followed up with a brief (one or two hours) exercise and AAR during the first afternoon session.

The second training morning can begin with a longer exercise and AAR, followed by a feedback session or "hot wash" in the afternoon. Participants should be encouraged to provide verbal feedback (question and answer period) and complete written surveys that will help to improve future training sessions. A sample survey is given in Section A.7.

Military Installations: If the exercise takes place on a military installation, the senior leadership may require an in-brief to be acquainted with what the exerci se is about, and an out-brief to be informed of the results. The briefings will be scheduled and conducted by the *Exercise Facilitator.*

A.2 Coordinating with the Exercising Organizations

If you are working with another organization to stage a large TERA event, your first step as the Exercise Facilitator is to identify yourself to two local points of contact (POC) in each exercising organization in advance of the scheduled event. The first POC will be responsible for domain knowledge in the organization including identifying facilities, training priorities, SOPs and goals for the exercise. We will refer to this primary POC as the *Event POC*. He or she can help you identify your second key POC, a local computer network administrator or support technician. This POC will be responsible for providing technical support for the organization's computer equipment and testing TERA on the computers to be used in the event. We will refer to this person as the *Technical POC.* Timetable of Support Milestones is a suggested timetable of support milestones which must be met for each exercise.

Support Milestone	Date
Local POCS responsible for technical and domain support identified	StartEx – 28 days
Exercise scenarios specified with input from exercising organizations	StartEx – 21 days
Information gathering (relevant SOPs, forms, etc) initiated	StartEx – 21 days
Facilties specified (distributed or co-located computer equipment, speakers and/or headsets, projecters, printers, bulletin boards)	StartEx – 14 days
TERA tested on all computers to be used (ensure exercise loads, video streams, bandwidth is sufficient for number of participants at each site)	StartEx – 7 days
Information gathering complete, all needed plans and uploadable information in hand	StartEx – 7 days
Computers, projector displays, speakers, headsets, and printers in exercise configuration and tested with scenarios to be run	StartEx – 1 day
All player role assignments specified, accounts created and accessible, and exercise support materials ready	StartEx – 1 day

Initial Contact: As soon as the local POCs are identified, the *Exercise Facilitator* should make an introductory telephone call to the *Event POC.* Use this initial call to establish a working relationship and review the details of the upcoming event. When reviewing the details with the *Event POC*, remind him or her of the following:

- Support and approval from the local leadership is critical to the success of an exercise.
- Suggest that VIPs be invited to either participate or to observe the exercise. VIPs could include the FBI liaisons, Civil Support Team (CST) commanders, military leadership or emergency management planners, the governor or other senior government officials, and the State Emergency Manager.
- The training event is a great publicity opportunity and local politicians may be willing to attend the exercise and provide introductory remarks to emphasize its importance.
- Local news media may be interested in covering the event.

Scenario Selection: The *Exercise Facilitator* should discuss the available scenarios with the *Event POC*, and determine what scenario(s) and player roles would provide the most benefit for the training in this

particular organization. For multi-organization exercises, all organizations must agree on the scenario(s).

Exercise Participants: Participants and contact information should be identified as early as possible so that they can be provided with information about the exercise and read-ahead material. Identified participants should have a background in the role that they will represent. It is important to include the local Emergency Manager or training officer (if he/she is not the *Event POC*) in this planning step to help determine who will participate and what role they will represent.

Exercise Customization: The exercise can be customized with locations, available resources, and documents via the Customization Wizard. This information should be specified before the event to avoid delays during execution.

This appendix contains materials to be sent to the jurisdiction to help them prepare for an exercise.

- **Letter of Introduction** – suggested text for a letter of introduction to the organization POC.
- **Exercise Participant Information** – This information can be sent to the participant to help them prepare for the exercise.

A.3 Conducting the Exercise

Facilities Requirements

When conducting a TERA training exercise, separate rooms should be set up for different groups of players. The number of rooms needed is dependent on whether the training scenario is Scene-centric or EOC-centric. The availability of rooms within the facility being used to conduct the exercise may factor into scenario selection. In a Scene-centric scenario, ideally three rooms will be utilized: an “On- Scene” room, an “EOC” room, and a “Policy Group” room. In all cases, “on scene” players should be unable to communicate directly to the players in the EOC, except by using their established communications channels – phone, radio, etc. This emphasizes the need for all players to provide clear reports and pass important information up, down, and laterally through their chain of command. The Policy Group is often in their own breakout room near the EOC, so they can discuss issues privately. If separate rooms are not available, one large room can be partitioned to keep the players separate and achieve the same goal. The Policy Group room is a good forum for explaining the system to VIP visitors before walking them through the EOC.

Figure 3.1. Player Stations are networked through a LAN. Exercise participants are divided into separate rooms when working a scenario.

In addition to a room for the scene, EOC, and Policy Group, there must be one room that can hold all of the participants with an overhead projection capability for holding training sessions and the AAR. In the exercise rooms, each Functional Area playing in the scenario needs a workstation with a PC and space for two or three people to work. The computers in each room must be networked together. Each desk should have a phone and phone list for communicating with other FAs. Ideally each room will have an overhead projector with the capability to project the TERA *Observer Station* display.

AAR: With assistance from the Exercise Facilitator, the *AAR* can be used as a driver for discussion by a representative of the exercising organization. Ideally, the AAR will be led by the organization's senior exercise leader or training officer. This keeps the review within the organization, which will add to the participants' comfort level and encourage discussion that is uninhibited by outside observers. Review the properties of the AAR with the AAR leader or the *Event POC* and encourage him/her to lead the review with the exercise participants. See the general guidelines in this manual for a suggested outline of the AAR session.

A.4 Suggested Letter of Introduction

Dear _____(Event POC)_____:

Thank you for taking the time and effort to assist with the facilitation of an Emergency Management Staff Trainer (TERA) based exercise/training event in your organization. To assist with your preparations I have enclosed the TERA exercise preparation materials we discussed on the phone. These materials will help ensure that all the necessary information is gathered and that exercise participants will understand what is expected of them.

For coordination and preparatory purposes I need the names and contact information (phone, e-mail and postal address) of two Points of Contact (POCs) in your organization at least four weeks prior to the scheduled event. The first person is referred to as the Event POC, ideally the organization's Emergency Manager or training officer. The Event POC will be responsible for identifying facilities, organization training priorities, standard operating procedures, and goals, and gathering customization information for use in the exercise. The Event POC will lead the exercise, or assist the TERA Facilitator in leading the exercise, whichever is preferred. The second POC, the Technical POC, will be responsible for providing technical support for the organization's equipment, including testing TERA on the computers to be used. This person should have a thorough knowledge and ready access to the organization's computer resources.

TERA is a computer-based simulation that enhances training and coordination of command level emergency response personnel. This is a great opportunity to showcase the training and emergency preparation your local emergency responders engage in. I encourage you to invite the local media to cover the event. A local government official may welcome the opportunity to present introductory remarks and observe the exercise. Other special guests who may be interested in attending include local FBI liaisons, the local National Guard Civil Support Team (CST) commander, local military installation leadership or emergency management planners, the governor, and the State Emergency Manager.

Preparation and coordination are the keys to success for an exercise event of this scale. Meeting the milestones listed on the chart at the top of the following page will ensure that both the exercise facilitators and the community are prepared to engage in a successful exercise.

Support Milestone	Date
Local POCS responsible for technical and domain support identified	StartEx – 28 days
Exercise scenarios specified with input from exercising organizations	StartEx – 21 days
Information gathering (relevant SOPs, forms, etc) initiated	StartEx – 21 days
Facilties specified (distributed or co-located computer equipment, speakers and/or headsets, projecters, printers, bulletin boards)	StartEx – 14 days
TERA tested on all computers to be used (ensure exercise loads, video streams, bandwidth is sufficient for number of participants at each site)	StartEx – 7 days
Information gathering complete, all needed plans and uploadable information in hand	StartEx – 7 days
Computers, projector displays, speakers, headsets, and printers in exercise configuration and tested with scenarios to be run	StartEx – 1 day
All player role assignments specified, accounts created and accessible, and exercise support materials ready	StartEx – 1 day

Please don't hesitate to call or email if you have any questions. I'm looking forward to helping you plan and execute a successful exercise.

Sincerely,

<Contact information>

NOTE: *The TERA Brochure, Quick Reference Guide, and User's Guide available on the TERA Portal may be reproduced and included as an attachment to this letter.*

Dear (Participant):

You have been selected to participate in a training exercise that utilizes the Emergency Management Staff Trainer (TERA). TERA is a computer simulation based exercise that enhances training and coordination of command-level emergency response personnel.

Using TERA, your organization will conduct a functional exercise utilizing the principles of the Incident Command System (ICS). You are requested to represent the _____ Role.

Your exercise coordinator will be: *(Exercise Coordinator's Name and Job Title)*
Phone: (*866-555-1234)* Email: *(Exercise Coordinator@exercise.org)*

The exercise will be held on ___*(date/time)*____ thru ___*(date/time)*____ at _____*(location)*_____.
Please notify the exercise coordinator if you have a scheduling conflict and are unable to attend one or all days.

If you do not already have a TERA login account, please request one at *www.TERA.jsrts.org* by clicking on the Request button. Specifying an email that ends in .gov or .mil will expedite the request. If you do not have an email ending in .gov or .mil, put __*(exercise name)*___ in the "How you heard about TERA" blank, and ensure the request is made several days prior to the event to give time for account approval.

Once your account is approved, please ensure you can log in to the TERA Portal and change your password to something that is easy for you to remember. Take the opportunity to explore TERA. The are several tutorials and individual exercises available that you may find useful.

To enhance realism you are encouraged to bring and use the same tools and procedures you would use for an actual incident response. Examples include radios, reference materials, forms, log books, and checklists.

You are encouraged to refresh your ICS skills and knowledge prior to the exercise. FEMA provides web links to on-line, self-paced, ICS Independent Study (IS) courses on their website. These courses can be completed for certification or just as a refresher. One or both of the following courses (web addresses provided) are recommended for this purpose:

IS-100 Introduction to Incident Command System

- *http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is100b.asp*

IS-700 NIMS An Introduction

- *http://training.fema.gov/emiweb/is/is700a.asp*

NOTE: *The TERA Brochure available on the TERA Portal may be reproduced and included as an attachment to this letter.*

A.5 Schedule

Table B.1., Sample Exercise Schedule (below) is provided as a sample agenda to assist jurisdiction personnel and TERA Facilitators with planning and coordination of a three day TERA exercise event. The support milestones shown in *Table B.2., Recommended Support Milestones,* are a timetable of preparatory actions and coordination for a three day TERA exercise event.

Table B.1. Sample Exercise Schedule

Day	Time	Scheduled Exercise Event
Monday	All Day	Facilitators and Support Trainers Travel Day
Tuesday	Morning	Facilitators and Support Trainers Exercise Planning
	Afternoon	Final Planning Conference, site setup, in-brief
Wednesday	Morning	Training: Overview, user training scenarios
	Afternoon	Training: Scenario 1, AAR
Thursday	Morning	Training: Scenario 2
	Afternoon	Training: Scenario 2 AAR, exercise hotwash, out-brief
Friday	All Day	Travel Day

Table B.2. Recommended Support Milestones

Support Milestone	Date
Local POCS responsible for technical and domain support identified	StartEx – 28 days
Exercise scenarios specified with input from exercising organizations	StartEx – 21 days
Information gathering (relevant SOPs, forms, etc.) initiated	StartEx – 21 days
Facilities specified (distributed or co-located computer equipment, speakers and/or headsets, projectors, printers, bulletin boards)	StartEx – 14 days
TERA tested on all computers to be used (ensure exercise loads, video streams, bandwidth is sufficient for number of participants at each site)	StartEx – 7 days
Information gathering complete, all needed plans and uploadable information in hand	StartEx – 7 days
Computers, projector displays, speakers, headsets, and printers in exercise configuration and tested with scenarios to be run	StartEx – 1 day
All player role assignments specified, accounts created and accessible, and exercise support materials ready	StartEx – 1 day

A.6 Exercise Setup Checklist

Facilities (co-located exercise)

- ☐ Briefing/AAR room (must have TERA workstation with projector and speakers)
- ☐ TERA workstation for each participating role/role group
- ☐ TERA workstation for each Host station (recommend 1 in each room)
- ☐ Bulletin board or white board for IAPs, orders, or other COP items
- ☐ Projector and screen, connected to Host station
- ☐ Printer

Tests

- ☐ All computers tested with TERA exercise
- ☐ Scenarios tested with any customization data
- ☐ All role player accounts available and activated

TERA Workstation (co-located exercise)

- ☐ Computer connected to Internet
- ☐ Space for 2 or 3 people to work
- ☐ Label to put on top of the monitor to identify which role plays there
- ☐ Labeled vest(s) for the players to wear
- ☐ TERA Quick Reference Guide

TERA Workstation (distributed exercise)

- ☐ Computer connected to Internet
- ☐ Headset connected to computer and tested with TERA
- ☐ TERA Quick Reference Guide

A.7 Exercise Critique Form

How much was spent learning how to use the TERA system?

- ☐ Not nearly enough
- ☐ Not quite enough
- ☐ The right amount
- ☐ A little too much
- ☐ Way too much

Comments

_____

_____

_____

How effective was the exercise in helping your organization prepare for an incident?

- ☐ Not effective
- ☐ Moderately effective
- ☐ Very effective

Comments

_____

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_____

The one thing about TERA that enhanced my training experience was

_____

_____

_____

The one thing about TERA that hindered my training experience was

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_____

The one thing I would add to this training exercise would be

_____

_____

_____

The one thing I would change about this training exercise would be

_____

_____

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Other Comments

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