

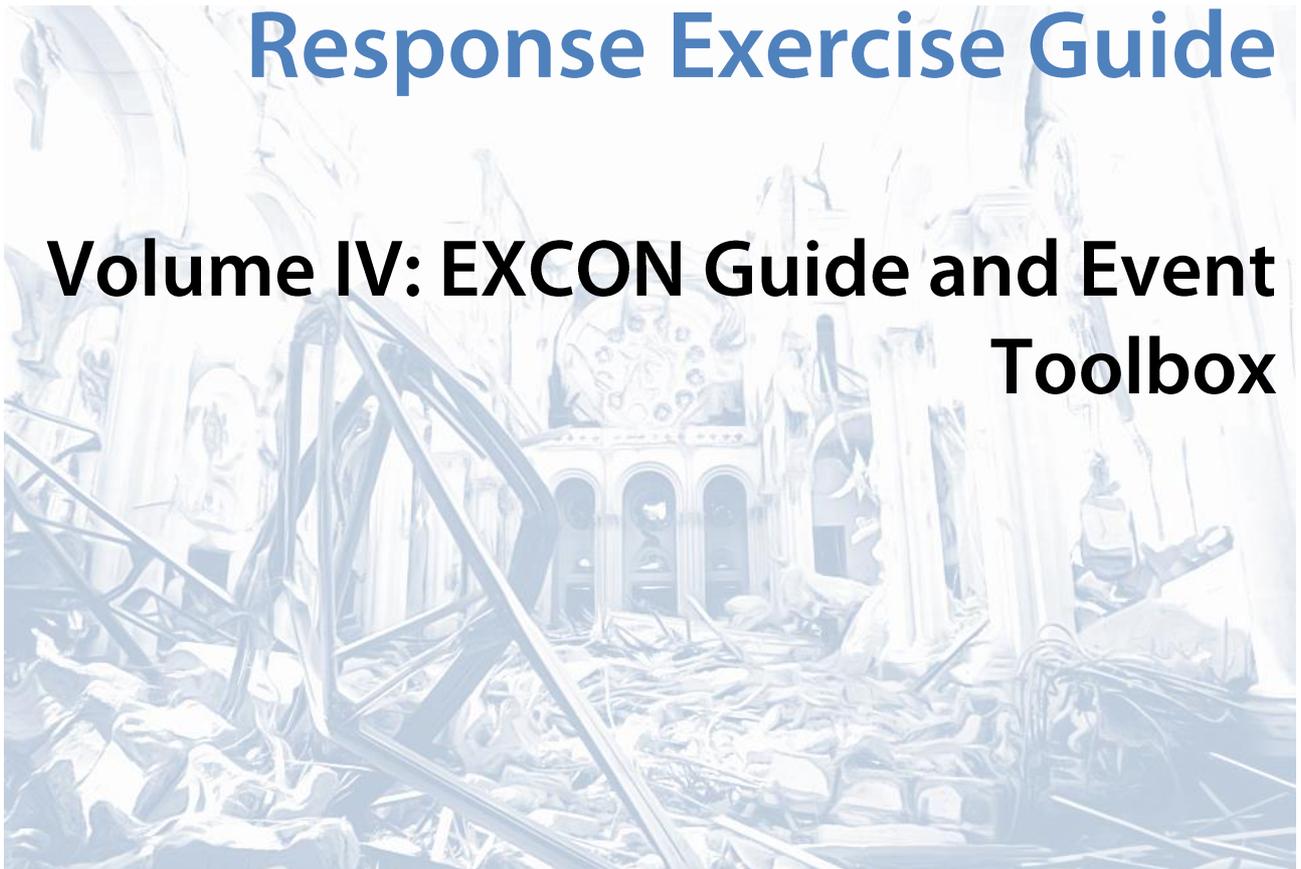


**OCHA** United Nations Office  
for the Coordination of  
Humanitarian Affairs



# INSARAG Earthquake Response Exercise Guide

## Volume IV: EXCON Guide and Event Toolbox



OCHA Field Coordination Support Section (FCSS)  
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## Abbreviations and Definitions

- INSARAG** International Search and Rescue Advisory Group - a global network under the United Nations umbrella dealing with urban search and rescue (USAR) related issues.
- INSARAG Guidelines** The methodology of INSARAG is described in its Guidelines.
- OCHA** United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs - part of the United Nations Secretariat responsible for bringing together humanitarian actors to ensure a coherent response to emergencies.
- UNDAC** United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination – a team of specialists tasked with situation assessment and coordinating the international response.
- USAR** Urban Search and Rescue – the process of searching, locating and rescuing people trapped within collapsed buildings.
- EMT** Emergency Medical Team – an organisation deploying from outside the affected country to offer medical assistance.
- LEMA** Local Emergency Management Agency - the national organisation responsible for disaster management.
- HCT** Humanitarian Country Team - a strategic and operational decision-making and oversight forum established and led by the UN Humanitarian Coordinator.
- OSOCC** On-Site Operations and Coordination Centre – a rapid response tool that provides a platform for the coordination of international response activities.
- V-OSOCC** Virtual On-Site Operations Coordination Centre – web-based part of the OSOCC system.
- RDC** Reception and Departure Centre – a coordination tool usually established at the point of entry for international teams.
- UCC** Coordination Cell for USAR teams – part of OSOCC.
- EMT CC** Coordination Cell for Emergency Medical Teams – part of the OSOCC.
- IHP** International Humanitarian Partnership – group that provides basic ICT and administrative support to the OSOCC system.
- APHP** Asia-Pacific Humanitarian Partnership – group that provides basic ICT and administrative support to the OSOCC system.
- AST** Americas Support Team – group that provides basic ICT and administrative support to the OSOCC system.
- HPC** Humanitarian Programme Cycle – a coordinated series of actions related to humanitarian response.
- IASC** Inter-Agency Standing Committee - the primary mechanism for inter- agency coordination of humanitarian assistance.
- EXCON** Exercise Coordination – the group responsible for the delivery and coordination of the Exercise Phase.

## Volume IV: EXCON Guide and Event Toolbox

### Part A: Guide for Exercise Coordination (EXCON)

### Part B: ERE Guide – Downloads, Links and Tools List

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## Part A: Guide for Exercise Coordination (EXCON)

### Role of the Exercise Coordination (EXCON) Team

The Earthquake Response Exercise requires control, information input from experts and coordination if it is to be a successful event, achieving the stated aims and objectives. To achieve this organisers employ a team of individual facilitators, presenters and speakers known collectively as the Exercise Coordination Team or EXCON.

The role of EXCON has many facets but essential the team's duties include:

- Informing and educating the participants through workshops, presentations or other activities.
- Hosting workshops, panel discussions and meetings.
- Coordinating and guiding participants through the various phases of the simulation exercise.
- Monitoring and observing participants and providing feedback and support to maximise the learning opportunities provided by the event.
- Providing feedback and evaluation to the hosts and organisers.

### EXCON Competencies

The EXCON team are a vital component in the success of any Earthquake Response Exercise and therefore team members should be experienced and knowledgeable individuals with practical experience in disaster management.

Ideally, EXCON team members should have previous experience of attending an Earthquake Response Exercise as a participant or will have observed an exercise previously. They should be experienced in the practicalities of disaster response in 'real-world' situations and understand the constraints of working in a rapidly changing and flexible scenario. Individually, they should be flexible, adaptable and able to remain calm in the face of rapidly changing situations.

EXCON team members will also be required to inform and educate the participants and must therefore have a high level of knowledge of their particular disaster response methodology (national or international) and also have good language skills so that they can communicate their expertise to the participants. Ideally, EXCON team members should understand that different cultures and regions of the world approach training and learning in different ways and therefore will be culturally sensitive and adaptable, changing their training style to suit the specific event.

The EXCON team are often called on to create solutions to problems or issues arising during the event. They will also need to develop and write content (such as exercise injects) during the exercise and therefore should be able to think creatively.

Finally, all EXCON team members must understand that during the Simulation Exercise Phase there often is no correct or incorrect solution to the problems arising in a disaster response and that their primary role is to observe and provide feedback to the participants. Therefore, team members should avoid judging the participants or trying to dictate one action over another. Feedback should be offered in a constructive way and potential solutions or corrective action only given when the course of the exercise will be detrimentally affected by the omissions or mistakes of the participants.

## EXCON Tasks and Responsibilities

### Overall Coordination and Facilitation

All EXCON staff members have a responsibility to ensure that the exercise meets its objectives and that the participants have the opportunity to undertake all their tasks and meet their learning objectives.

EXCON staff members will need to adapt between being facilitators (delivering injects and observing tasks), mentors (offering ideas and options) and trainers (providing information and teaching), dependent upon the situation they find with the participants.

To ensure that these three modes of operation are balanced and that the simulation exercise proceeds according to the exercise schedule, one or more of the EXCON staff will be appointed to coordinate the EXCON team. The **EXCON Coordinator** is responsible to the Exercise Director(s) for the following:

- Overall conduct and work of the EXCON Team
- Overall coordination of the Simulation Exercise, using the Master Exercise Timeline
- Overall coordination of any Field Trip (if part of the event)
- Linking the EXCON team with the Exercise Director and the event management
- Ensuring all welfare and transport arrangements are in place for the EXCON team

A **Situation Rooms Coordinator** will support the EXCON Coordinator. He or she will be responsible for the following:

- Coordination between the four Situation Rooms
- Providing additional guidance and information for the Situation Room EXCON team members
- Linking the Situation Rooms with the EXCON Coordinator and the central EXCON team

Other members of the team will be tasked to **support a Functional Group** by running a Situation Room or observing and monitoring activities in the OSOCC, UCC, RDC, national control room (LEMA), Base of Operations or UN-HCT meeting room. A table showing all the functional positions within a typical EXCON team is linked for download as **B1 EXCON Positions**.

The EXCON Coordinator, in conjunction with the event organisers, will organise an initial meeting of all the EXCON team members, both national and international, the day before the commencement of the ERE event.

At this meeting the specific assignments for all the EXCON team will be confirmed and a plan for the work to prepare for the event will be made. Details of this meeting are linked for download as **B2 Preliminary EXCON Meeting**.

## EXCON in the Exercise Preparation Phase

The event organisers may call on EXCON staff members to deliver a session during the Exercise Preparation Phase. In these situations, staff members are required to review the relevant learning outcomes, primary content and any other relevant material such as previous presentations or lesson plans.

A list of typical sessions can be found in **Part A of ERE Guide Volume II – Event Delivery and Evaluation** and a template for “Session Plans” is linked for download as **B5 Session Plan Template**.

The event organisers may also call on EXCON staff members to facilitate one of the workshop sessions for the Functional Groups. These workshop sessions are:

- Group 1 - LEMA
- Group 2 - National Responders
- Group 3 - UNDAC & Partner Organisations
- Group 4 - International USAR
- Group 5 - Emergency Medical Teams (EMT)
- Group 6 - UN-HCT and OCHA Regional Office

EXCON staff members tasked with facilitating a workshop are required to review the relevant information prior to the workshop, including:

- The appropriate Functional Group Guide (Volume III of the ERE Guide) – this provides guidance on how to conduct the workshop session and contains information on the resources you will require
- PowerPoint Presentations and handouts required for the workshop and available as downloads.

Whilst a template for session plans is linked for download as **B5 Session Plan Template**, the methodology of the ERE Package provides flexibility to facilitators, speakers and the EXCON, determining what needs to be achieved and not how it is done. It is the responsibility of facilitators, presenters and members of the EXCON team to decide how to deliver the content and when, what the best format and delivery method will be.

## EXCON in the Simulation Exercise Phase

The Simulation Exercise is a **task-driven event**, each of the Functional Groups being set a series of **Primary Tasks**, the completion of which will ensure that the participants meet the ERE Learning Outcomes described in **ERE Guide Volume I - Annex B – Learning Outcomes**.

The pace and activities of the Simulation Exercise are controlled by the EXCON Team, in particular the EXCON Coordinator. He or she is guided by the '**Master Exercise Timeline**' that details all the primary tasks for each functional group and the sequence in which they should be accomplished against a timeline of the two real days (8 to 10 scenario days) that makes up the Simulation Exercise. Each Functional Group's tasks are also listed in the respective Functional Group guides (Volume III).

During the course of the preparation and planning for the Simulation Exercise Phase, each staff member of EXCON will be assigned to a specific role or roles. Essentially, there are three distinct EXCON assignments: as part as the central EXCON team, as a facilitator for Groups 1, 3 and 6 and lastly, as a facilitator for Groups 2, 4 and 5.

### EXCON Central Team

The EXCON central team includes the Exercise Director, the EXCON Coordinator and the Situation Rooms Coordinator. Additional roles covered by the central team include monitoring and inputting through the Virtual OSOCC and monitoring and observing the RDC in the initial stages of the exercise. One member of the central team may also be responsible for the coordination of all the role players participating in the Simulation Exercise Phase.

### Facilitators for Groups 1, 3 and 6 (OSOCC, UCC, LEMA and UN-HCT Rooms)

EXCON staff members assigned to LEMA, UNDAC & Partner Organisations or to the UN-HCT and OCHA Regional Office groups will be working in the rooms allocated for these specific groups.

EXCON staff members tasked with facilitating a workshop are required to review the relevant information prior to the workshop, including:

- The appropriate Functional Group Guide (ERE Guide Volume III) – this provides guidance on the main tasks and learning outcomes that each Functional Group needs to achieve as well as a timeline that indicates at which point during the simulation exercise these tasks need to undertaken.
- The blank Inject template for EXCON is linked for download as **B3 Inject Template**.
- PowerPoint Presentations and handouts required for the workshop and available as downloads.

EXCON staff members are required to review the relevant material and contact the event organisers should they have any queries. Suggestions regarding changes that will improve the content and or delivery of the simulation exercise should be submitted to the INSARAG Secretariat through the event organisers.

### **Facilitators for Groups 2, 4 and 5 (Situation Rooms)**

EXCON staff members assigned to work in the exercise Situation Rooms (SR) will focus on either the National Responders (Group 2) or International Responders (Groups 4 & 5).

There will normally be four (4) separate Situation Rooms, each of which represents a defined geographical area within the scenario. The Situation Rooms are where the national response resources and international response teams work to conduct the tasks necessary to complete the mission and meet the exercise objectives.

EXCON staff members tasked with facilitating a workshop are required to review the relevant information prior to the workshop, including:

- The appropriate Functional Group Guide – this provides guidance on the main tasks and learning outcomes that each Functional Group needs to achieve as well as a timeline that indicates at which point during the simulation exercise these tasks need to be undertaken.
- The blank template for EXCON is linked for download as **B3 Exercise Inject Template**.
- The appropriate Situation Room contents folder – this contains photographs of collapsed structures, linked to descriptions and scripts that detail the extent of damage, the nature of the debris and size of the voids, information about the victims and any hazardous materials that may be present and other relevant facts. Situation Room folders are available as downloads.
- PowerPoint Presentations and handouts required for the workshop and available as downloads.

EXCON staff members working as facilitators for Groups 2, 4 and 5 should have relevant operational experience in order that they can interpret the contents of the Situation Room folders and respond in a manner simulating the real disaster situation when responding to questions from the participants.

EXCON facilitators are also required to review the relevant material and contact the event organisers should they have any queries. Suggestions regarding changes that will improve the content and or delivery of the simulation exercise should be submitted to the INSARAG Secretariat through the event organisers.

## Tasks and Simulation Exercise Tools

During the course of the exercise, a series of learning outcomes must be met in order to achieve the exercise objectives. The learning outcomes require that the participants undertake a series of tasks. Tasks are specific steps or activities within the methodology of an organisation's response to the disaster or event.

During the Simulation Exercise Phase, organisations and individual participants should follow the methodology already in place, either the INSARAG/UNDAC methodology for the international participants or the national disaster response procedures for participants from the host country. It is assumed that participants will be experienced and have knowledge of the appropriate disaster response methodology and the specific tasks that they will need to undertake during the Simulation Exercise Phase.

So that the Simulation Exercise proceeds at the required pace and that all the objectives can be met, the EXCON team must be able to exert control and influence the work of the participants. They must be able to speed up or slow down simulated events to ensure that different Functional Groups are coordinated as well as reminding participants of the tasks that need to be completed, if it seems that any of these have been forgotten or delayed.

To help the EXCON coordinate they have a few Simulation Exercise Tools. Primarily, these tools are as follows:

- Scenario
- Timeline
- Injects
- Data (Information)
- Actions

Further explanation of these tools and their use is available for download as **B4 Simulation Exercise Tools**.

## Exercise Evaluation

The EXCON has additional responsibilities for the evaluation of the event, observing the participants carrying out their tasks, assessing the results and feeding back to the event organisers. EXCON, because of the experience of many of its members, should also provide collective feedback on the preparation and conduct of the exercise event itself.

All EXCON staff members should familiarise themselves with the content of the document relating to the evaluation of the INSARAG Earthquake Response Exercise.

## Part B: ERE Guide – Downloads, Links and Tools List

Part B of this Volume provides the papers, tools and templates for the following personnel:

- Event organisers
- Facilitators and Presenters
- EXCON team members

Links to these documents, tools and templates are included throughout the four (4) volumes of the Earthquake Response Guide but are all listed here for ease of reference.

**A1 Facilities Requirements Information Paper**

**A2 RDC Specifications within the Earthquake Response Exercise**

**A3 OSOCC Specifications within the Earthquake Response Exercise**

**A4 Situation Rooms within the Earthquake Response Exercise**

**A5 Generic Invitation Letter**

**A6 Generic Registration Form**

**A7 Generic Participants Information Document**

**A8 Outline Scenario Document**

**A9 Generic Event Checklist**

**A10 Generic Earthquake Response Event Agenda**

**A11 Functional Participant Groups**

**A12 Learning Outcomes for Functional Groups**

**A13 Generic Planning Timeline**

**A14 Planning Team Functions**

**A15 Learning Content for Functional Groups**

**A16 Primary Tasks for Functional Groups**

**A17 Key Tasks during the ERE Exercise**

**B1 EXCON Positions**

**B2 Preliminary EXCON Meeting**

**B3 Exercise Inject Template**

**B4 Paper explaining the Simulation Exercise Tools**

**B5 Session Plan Template**

**B6 Evaluation Form Template**

**B7 Paper on the Use of the Virtual OSOCC**

**B8 Scenario and Exercise Briefing**

**B9 Field Structural Assessment**

**C1 Master Exercise Timeline**

**C2 Timeline for the LEMA Functional Group**

**C3 Timeline for National Responders Functional Group**

**C4 Timeline for UNDAC Functional Group**

**C5 Timeline for the International USAR Teams Functional Group**

**C6 Timeline for the Emergency Medical Teams Functional Group**

**C7 Timeline for the HCT Functional Group**

**S1 Situation Room and Worksites Template**

**P1 PowerPoint Presentations**

**S1 Situation Room Folders**

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