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Background

Sweden is the Lead Country of Task 5, according to the [Terms of Reference](#) for EWG OWR, and responsible for developing the exercise framework on response on pollution on shore.

The proposal has developed in accordance with the EWG SHORE needs and the work has been discussed at the several meetings. Please find attached Sweden's final proposal for an amended exercise chapter for the HELCOM response Manual Volume III for EWG SHORE to consider. If the meeting approves the proposal it will replace the previous exercise chapter in the Response Manual Volume III and can be submitted as part of the revised Response Manual for consideration by [RESPONSE 21-2016](#) (15-17 March 2015).

Sweden is thankful for the support and encouragement from the group during the project period and we are pleased to complete one of EWG SHORE's six tasks.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to

- take part of the presentation to be given by the consultant Pär Eriksson, FOI
- consider and discuss the proposal for an revised exercise framework,
- decide on the way forward.



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BALEX on the Shore – An Exercise Framework

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The HELCOM RESPONSE Expert Working Group on response on the Shore (EWG Shore) has decided to develop the exercise framework for exercises regarding the co-operation in response to marine pollution on the shore (HELCOM RESPONSE Manual Vol III, chapter 6). Sweden offered to take the lead in this work.

Within Sweden, the Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB) has been responsible for the development of a draft exercise framework for exercises on the shore. As a first step and as a basis for the development of this draft framework, a survey of the lessons from the BALEX DELTA exercises (at sea) from 2004 to 2014 was commissioned to the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI). This was summarised in a report, *HELCOM BALEX DELTA EXERCISES 2004 – 2014* (MSB 935, November 2015), hereafter generally referred to as *the survey*.

FOI was subsequently tasked with the development of a draft exercise framework. In this report, the main document presents some deliberations, while the Annex A contains the actual proposal for an exercise framework.

1.2 Aim

The overall aim of this report is to develop a draft exercise framework for HELCOM BALEX exercises on the shore. Furthermore, the deliberations and choices made while developing the draft framework are presented.

1.3 Limitations

The analysis focus on the revision of the HELCOM RESPONSE Manual, VOL III, chapter 6. Although other parts of the manual may possibly need to be revised as a consequence of the suggestions for the draft framework, this report *only* deals with VOL III, chapter 6.

1.4 Method

Several publications have been used as a basis when developing the draft exercise framework. Apart from the survey (MSB 935), especially important is the existing HELCOM manual (*HELCOM Manual on Co-operation in Response to Marine Pollution*), including, but not limited to the exercise frameworks in Vol I and Vol III.

The survey included interviews to deepen the understanding of the conducted exercises. Ideas and comments expressed in these interviews have been important also in the development of the exercise framework. A preliminary draft of the exercise framework was presented to the HELCOM EWG Shore at a meeting in Poland September 9, 2015. A number of revisions were made in the text as a result of the discussions. Finally, comments on the draft framework have been collected from different individuals.

The draft framework is a proposal that should be discussed in, and decided by, the appropriate HELCOM bodies.

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2 Important Considerations

2.1 Overall considerations

A number of overall considerations have been important in the development of the draft exercise framework for HELCOM exercises on the shore. First of all, the exercise framework for HELCOM exercises on the shore needs to be consistent with the existing exercise framework for HELCOM exercises at sea (HELCOM RESPONSE Manual VOL I, chapter 10). This framework, together with its terminology and procedures, is well-known, at least to the organisations and personnel involved in the at sea operations and exercises. However, one challenge identified in the survey of the BALEX DELTA exercises 2004-2014 was a lack of well-defined aims. This affected the exercises as well as the evaluations negatively. Hence it has been thought necessary to increase the emphasis on the aims in the exercise framework. Furthermore, a more structured process for the evaluation of the exercises is proposed.

Secondly, the framework must, as far as possible, be consistent with frameworks in other existing forums for multinational cooperation on the combating of pollution, to avoid parallel structures and double-work. This is especially important for those forums where a majority of the Contracting Parties participate.

Thirdly, the exercise framework should underline the relationship between the exercise aims, the exercise evaluation, and the continued development of the exercises as well as of the HELCOM RESPONSE Manual.

Fourthly, the exercises should be decided and designed as a part of an overall plan for the development of the HELCOM cooperation on the response to pollution on the shore. Exercises are not intrinsically valuable in themselves, rather they are tools for achieving abilities agreed on at the HELCOM strategic level.

Fifthly, the framework is not primarily a handbook for developers of exercises, but rather an overall guideline. It needs to be short and to the point.

Finally, the framework should be based on tested and proven procedures for the planning, preparation, implementation and evaluation of exercises. One such collection of procedures and best practices is the MSB Guidelines for Exercise Planning (in Swedish, *MSB Övningsvägledning*). This has been used as a reference in this report.

2.2 Why exercises on the shore?

Exercises at sea have been on the HELCOM agenda for several decades. In some regards these exercises are quite straightforward and simple. For instance, the participating units are fairly similar regardless of their country of origin and there exists a common, basic understanding regarding their roles and functions. Furthermore, the exercised personnel can stay at the ships and bring most of their own supplies. Finally, years of at sea exercises in the HELCOM context as well as in other multinational and bilateral contexts have resulted in the development of common procedures, a common language/terminology and a common know-how.

This is not at all the case for operations and exercises on the shore. These involve a multitude of organisations, different from each other in roles, cultures, organisations, perceptions etc. You have the armed forces, the coast guard, the police, the environmental agencies, the resources controlled by local (city) and regional (county) councils, volunteer organisations et cetera.

Exercises and operations on the shore therefore offers complexities in at least three different dimensions. First of all, the complexities due to differences between the organisations involved (even when from the same country). This includes aspects such as culture, professionalism, terminology, organisation, procedures, legal and administrative frameworks, etc. Secondly, the complexities due to the differences between countries. Apart from the aspects above, issues such as language and crisis management mandates can be mentioned. An exercise or an operation in one country could involve and organise actors and resources in a very different way than would a similar exercise/operation in another country. Finally,

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multinational operations at sea are generally speaking more straightforward, and have reached a higher degree of exercise maturity than large-scale, multinational exercises on the shore. On the shore there is a lack of common procedures that are recognized and exercised.

Operations on the shore will, due to the complexities above, and due to the general availability of national/local resources, remain predominantly national. This will affect the design and focus of the exercises. They will in most cases be less about maximising the number of participating Contracting Parties in an operational phase and more about involving those resources that a specific country would request in a large-scale pollution incident on the shore. This means that the exercise will deal with issues such as the identification of needs, the requests for resources, the transfer of resources and the acceptance/use of these resources. It also means that although all Contracting Parties need some support, this support will be quite specific and different for each country due to the local preconditions. Resources requested will in most cases primarily be specific functions (e.g. bird clean-up units), specific equipment (e.g. booms) and specific expertise (e.g. wildlife experts).

As stated above, the organisations involved in on the shore operations generally have a low maturity when it comes to large-scale, multinational operations/exercises. Hence it will take time before it is possible to carry out more complex exercises on the shore and any attempt to try to rush the development would probably be counterproductive. Instead most exercises will, at least in the beginning, be table-top, possibly combined with basic operational exercises (functional exercises or operational exercises, testing a short and specific operational sequence, simulating most of the surrounding environment). In due time, an increased complexity may be introduced in the exercises and allow for a larger part of the response system to be tested, including the coordination between operations at sea and on the shore. However, even in the future a large-scale, combined sea-shore operational exercises will probably be an exception. Such exercises are complex to design and conduct, and often offers limited added-value compared to for instance exercise set in just one context, simulating the surrounding environment. The examples of large-scale, combined and multinational *operational* exercises will probably be few also in the future, and need to be carefully chosen and motivated.

2.3 Exercises in support of strategic development

One key conclusion in the survey of the BALEX DELTA at sea exercises 2004-2014 was that there is a need to clearly define the overall objectives of the exercises. These objectives should ideally be deducted from a strategy for the development of the capabilities for multinational operations within the HELCOM cooperation. Although it may be doubted whether such a strategy will be developed any time soon, there may exist some alternatives to an explicit strategy. For instance, the HELCOM RESPONSE Manual in itself could in parts function as an implicit strategy together with other HELCOM policy documents. Any strategy will need to be regularly revised, and the exercise objectives will need to be adjusted accordingly.

2.4 Types of exercises

The HELCOM RESPONSE Manual, VOL I, Chapter 10, outlines five different kinds of exercises for at sea exercises (Synthetic Exercise/table-top exercise, Functional Exercise, Equipment Exercise, Operational Exercise and State-of-the-art Exercise). This is an established and well-known terminology consisting of generic types of exercises. Since no reason for changing this terminology has been identified in the analysis, it is proposed to use the same types for the on the shore exercises.

In line with the current exercise framework for on the shore exercises, an exercise could be any of the generic types above, followed by either of the suffixes *sea*, *shore* or *combined*. However, *combined* will be less common, at least during the first years of on the shore exercises. The main reason for this is the need to start with the development and training of basic procedures and features. If aspects regarding the at sea exercises need to be introduced, this can be done through simulation, avoiding several of the challenges and complexities of a combined exercise.

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The type of exercise should be chosen based on the exercise objectives and should be part of the strategic direction of the exercise series. The choice need to be preceded by a dialogue between the intended host country and the HELCOM RESPONSE Group to ensure both the fulfillment of the objectives and that the exercise is appropriate for the host country, adapted to its preconditions and needs.

Since the operational maturity is low regarding large-scale, multinational on the shore exercises there is a need for preparing at the national and sub-national levels before engaging in a multinational exercise. Exercises at the national and sub-national levels therefore have an important role in preparing the national system for bilateral and multinational exercises. This could be supported by HELCOM, for instance by collecting and making available standard exercises, focused on the training of specific agreed procedures, cooperative structures and terminology.

2.5 Participating organisations

To have a multitude of organisations participating in an exercise on the shore, would mirror the real situation, increase the realism and offer multiple perspectives. However, it is not always the most functional choice. As the number of participants increase, so does the complexity of the exercise and possibly also the number of aims. Therefore, certain types or groups of organisations could and should instead be simulated.

Furthermore, participants will vary from country to country, depending on available resources, administrative and legal frameworks, etc. While in some countries the military would be a logical participant, in others it would not. While in some countries the identified need for cross-border support would include personnel, in others it would not.

This means that not all Contracting Parties and not all major organisations will participate in every given exercise on the shore. However, there is a need to ensure the transparency and to ensure that lessons learned are made available to all HELCOM Contracting Parties and observers. Hence, those Contracting Parties and other organisations that do not participate in the exercise should be invited to observe. Furthermore, the Contracting Parties are encouraged, when appropriate, to invite the HELCOM Contracting Parties and Observers also to national and sub-national exercises on the shore as a part of the broader exchange of experiences and ideas.

Contracting Parties and organisations invited to participate in an exercise should normally also be offered to participate in the planning phase. This would not only give them a deeper understanding of the exercise but also help setting up an exercise that is realistic while ensuring multiple perspectives. However, to participate in the planning process should not be mandatory as not all organisations have the sufficient resources for this. The views and expectations of Contracting Parties and organisations *not participating* in the planning process should then be sought through other channels.

2.6 Planning, execution and evaluation

Although the HELCOM RESPONSE Manual states that the aims and scenario of an exercise should be decided by the HELCOM RESPONSE Group, this is not the case today. Instead the survey of the BALEX DELTA at sea exercises 2004-2014 showed that it is the host nations alone that decide these issues. This is potentially negative. First of all, it could lead to a decoupling of the link between the exercises and any overall HELCOM strategy for the development of the capabilities for multinational co-operation in response to marine pollution on the shore. Secondly, as was also noted in the survey of the BALEX DELTA exercises, the continuity between the exercises could be affected negatively if no overarching body co-ordinates the exercises.

Instead it is the draft framework proposed that the final decision regarding the exercise aims should rest with the HELCOM RESPONSE Group, not the host nation, to ensure that the exercises support the HELCOM overall strategy and to ensure the continuity between exercises. Since the HELCOM RESPONSE Group is large, it may be appropriate to create a sub-working group with specific responsibilities for preparing the HELCOM RESPONSE exercise decisions. The host nation could however

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still propose exercise aims to the HELCOM RESPONSE Group. Furthermore, the development of the exercise scenario and the exercise design would remain a host nation responsibility as would the planning and direction of the exercise.

As a basis for the development of the aims and design of individual exercises there should be a HELCOM RESPONSE EXERCISE PLAN, HREP. This need to be developed by the HELCOM RESPONSE (or a dedicated working group) and possibly decided on a yearly basis by the HELCOM COMMISSION. The need for exercises (strategic development plans, known capability gaps, identified threats and risks, evaluation results from previous exercises) should be one starting point. The analysis of these factors is a complex task. It could either be done in a working group, with one or several Contracting Parties doing the main part of the necessary analysis, or be sub-contracted to a specific Contracting Party.

Furthermore, the HREP need to be based on a dialogue with the Contracting Parties in which the will and the capabilities for hosting exercises are investigated. This dialogue should be led by the HELCOM RESPONSE, and taken into account in the development of the HREP.

Although the exercises would still be dependent on the ambition and the willingness of the individual Contracting Parties (both as hosts and as participants), the development of a HREP would ensure an increased degree of continuity and that individual exercises help fulfilling the HELCOM strategic development goals.

The planning process should be based on a formalised, but not overly structured, approach that can be adapted to the size, type and complexity of the specific exercise. A small table-top exercise could be planned and prepared with much less effort than for instance a big operational exercise. However, in the manual a planning process designed for large-scale exercises is described. This can be down-sized by the host nation to fit smaller and simpler exercises. The planning process supports the planning and conduct of exercises, while ensuring some conformity in process and form between exercises.

One of the main differences between exercises at sea and on the shore is that the latter to a larger extent involves aspects such as border crossings, customs, clearances, logistics, insurance issues etc. This is why it is proposed that the predominantly national exercises on the shore should focus on training the request, reception, use and return of exactly those resources that could be in demand in an actual pollution on the shore incident. In this way the exercises can help preparing and simplifying the request and use of these resources in an actual crisis situation.

The objective of the evaluation is to investigate both the effectiveness (goal fulfillment) and the efficiency (rational use of resources and a well-functioning process for planning and direction) of the exercise. The results from the evaluation need to be fed into the development of the operational procedures as well as of the HELCOM manual and future exercises.

An exercise evaluation must be based on predefined and clear-cut aims for the exercise. It must furthermore be carried out in a prepared and structured manner, i.e. with indicators, criteria and measurement/observation points decided in advance and deducted from the aims of the exercise. Not all factors are quantitative, meaning that qualitative observations and lessons need to be included in most exercise evaluations. This will affect the choice of indicators and criteria.

The evaluation team would be organised differently in a national (or subnational) exercise than in a multinational or bilateral one. In the former, the evaluation team would in most cases consist of individuals from the country in question. In a multinational exercise, the team could instead consist of representatives from all or a number of the participating countries. However, since exercises on the shore, contrary to the exercises at sea, are predominantly national, it is thought that even for multinational exercises the evaluation team would in many cases be national. This said, a multinational exercise should strive for a multinational evaluation team, ensuring multiple perspectives.

Regardless of the composition of the evaluation team, the evaluations in themselves need to be carried out in a structured way, similar in all exercises. This includes the inclusion of the evaluation team in the planning process, allowing for the team to influence the design of the exercise ensuring its evaluability. A template for the Evaluation Report is offered in the framework, with the aim to streamline evaluations while underlining the interaction between aims, evaluation and future development.

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Annex A An Exercise Framework for BALEX on the Shore

HELCOM has a long tradition of multinational exercises to test and train the cooperation in response to marine pollution at sea. However, with few exceptions the response to pollution on the shore has not been part of the HELCOM exercise programme, in spite of the fact that pollution at sea in most cases also will reach the shore.

An operation on the shore involves a multitude of actors that have different roles, organisational principles, procedures, decision-making structures, cultures and languages. This makes coordination and cooperation challenging even in a purely national context. Furthermore, each HELCOM Contracting Party has its own specific national legal and administrative framework, affecting how operations on the shore are conducted, resulting in considerable challenges to any coordinated, multinational effort. These challenges are further accentuated if the cooperation with operations at sea is added.

Operations for combating pollution on the shore are predominately national. Most of the Contracting Parties have access to a variety of national resources, including volunteer organisations, which they may call upon. Still, for large-scale incidents on the shore, national preparedness and national resources will not always suffice and multinational support may need to be requested. In such events it is essential that effective mechanisms, together with common procedures and a common terminology, have been established and tested.

The overall operational maturity is quite low regarding multinational, large-scale operations on the shore. Exercises can therefore have an important role in the development of the local, national and multinational capabilities for operations on the shore.

Types of exercises

In accordance with the HELCOM RESPONSE Manual, VOL I, chapter 10, the following types of exercises for the combating of pollution on the shore have been agreed upon:

- Synthetic Exercise/table-top exercise (on the shore)
- Functional Exercise, including Alarm Exercise (on the shore)
- Equipment Exercise (on the shore)
- Operational Exercise (on the shore)
- State-of-the-art Exercise (on the shore)

All exercise types may be conducted as *combined*, involving both at sea and on the shore operations. They may focus on one or several of the categories strategic/operational decision-makers, staff, experts or operational units.

Due to the differences in exercise maturity between on the shore and at sea capabilities, but also due to the fact that combined exercises will result in an increased complexity regarding the planning and direction of the exercise, *most* exercises will be *either* at sea *or* on the shore for the foreseeable future. Simulation may in some cases be used to introduce specific aspects of combined operations. However, when testing the overall HELCOM RESPONSE system, combined exercises should be used. These could be limited table-top or functional exercises in the beginning, aimed at developing coordinating procedures, technologies and terminology. In the long run, large-scale combined operational exercises could be used to train and test the overall HELCOM RESPONSE system and its operational capabilities.

The exercises can be carried out at different levels:

- Multilateral cross-border exercise
- Bilateral cross-border exercise
- National exercise
- Sub-national exercise

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- Local exercise

Exercises at the local, sub-national and national levels will develop the ability to participate in exercises and operations at the bilateral and multilateral levels. Given the predominately national character of operations on the shore, Contracting Parties are invited to submit standard exercises for the training of especially important capabilities, functions and procedures to a HELCOM repository. These exercise templates would be made available to the Contracting Parties.

In multinational exercises, a list of available, national resources for combating pollution on the shore is used by the host nation to identify what resources to request. While this would train the procedures for the request and reception of assistance, it would also raise the awareness and preparedness among available resources regarding when and under what circumstance they would be in demand.

The exercise type is chosen based on the objectives of the exercise and on the specific needs and capabilities of the host nation. Table-top exercises are useful and cost-effective alternatives when exploring and developing procedures or when training basic skills such as for instance procedures for cooperation. Functional exercises, that may be repeated until the aims are achieved, are useful for testing and training limited functionalities while simulating the surrounding environment. Equipment exercises offer an opportunity to learn about and develop procedures for specific equipment, involving a limited group of concerned. Operational exercises, possibly with a simulated environment, are useful for instance when testing or training more complex cooperative abilities or the coordination of several different actors. State-of-the-art exercises, finally, are useful to demonstrate and disseminate new methods or procedures to a larger group of Contracting Parties and participating organisations.

Exercises in support of strategic development

All HELCOM exercises – at sea, on the shore or combined – support the strategic development of the HELCOM cooperation on the response to marine pollution. A multiannual HELCOM RESPONSE Exercise Plan (HREP) is developed and revised on a yearly basis. The HREP lists all HELCOM Exercises for the coming three years and specify their dates and venues, the host nation, the overall aim and what strategic development objectives the exercise supports.

The HREP is developed by the HELCOM RESPONSE Group (possibly by a working group) and decided by the HELCOM COMMISSION. The development of the HREP is based on two parallel processes. First of all, an analysis for determining the needs for exercises. This analysis is in turn based on the strategic development plan for the HELCOM cooperation on the response to marine pollution, known capability gaps, identified threats and risks and the evaluation results from preceding exercises. Secondly, a dialogue with the Contracting Parties in which the will and the capabilities for hosting exercises are investigated. It is recommended that the hosting of exercises is rotated between the Contracting Parties, taking into consideration the rotating responsibility for the BALEX DELTA at sea exercises.

Frequency of exercises

Multi- and bilateral exercises on the shore – of different types and at different levels – are carried out whenever a Contracting Party identifies a need or when called for in the HREP. However, to keep up the momentum in the development of the co-operation in response to marine pollution on the shore HELCOM should have at least one *multinational* exercise (shore or combined) every year. This exercise may be table-top, functional or operational, depending on the objectives of the exercise and the capabilities and resources of the host nation. It is normally preceded by preparatory exercises at the national, sub-national and/or local levels in the host country, training for instance basic procedures and coordination functions.

Although hosting an on the shore exercise is voluntary, it is recommended that the host nation responsibility rotates among the HELCOM countries. This ensures that the knowledge and capability to lead on the shore operations are evenly distributed and that the specific local conditions for on the shore operations (geographical, legal, organisational, etc.) of all Contracting Parties are high-lighted.

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Participation

A broad participation is generally desirable for an on the shore exercise as this reflects the situation in an actual operation. However, exactly what organisations that are invited will differ from host nation to host nation depending on available national capabilities and the local administrative and legal frameworks. Furthermore, if the aim of the exercise is narrow, for instance to train a specific function or capability, it may be more appropriate to simulate a number of participants instead.

Wildlife protection and rehabilitation together with the initial clean-up operations on the shore are important components in most on the shore response operations. In many countries volunteer organisations have a vital role in these tasks. Hence, they need to be included early on in the planning process for on the shore exercises.

The potential role of experts, for instance from the European Union, is acknowledged. The exercises need to be designed so that the role of such experts is reflected and possibly included. The experts' role and advice could be simulated or represented by real experts participating in the exercise.

All HELCOM exercises are opportunities to learn. Those Contracting Parties, and those major organisations with roles in combating pollution on the shore, that are not participating in the HELCOM exercise are invited to observe. When possible and appropriate, representatives from other Contracting Parties and from major organisations are also invited to observe non-HELCOM bilateral, national or sub-national on the shore exercises.

To participate in an on the shore exercise present a number of practical challenges, including for instance logistics, customs and clearances. The invitation to participate in an exercise should be sent out at least three months before the start-up meeting in the planning process. If the exercise involves the cross-border transfer of materiel and functions the start-up meeting should be no later than nine months before the start of the exercise.

Planning, execution and evaluation

Organisation

The host nation is responsible for the planning and direction of the exercise, with the support from the participating countries and organisations and with the HELCOM RESPONSE Group (possibly represented by a working group) having the final decision on the aims, scenario, and design.

Exercises should be planned as a project with well-defined boundaries and adequate resources. The use of a project management model is recommended.

Several things should be clarified before starting the actual exercise planning, such as:

- mandate
- overall aim
- budget
- resources
- project group/roles for the planning, direction and evaluation of the exercise
- timeframes/duration

Planning process

Each multilateral and bilateral HELCOM exercise should have clear overall aims stated in the HREP. The exercise planning is based on these overall aims, taking into consideration the needs and aims of the individual participating organisations.

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A start-up meeting is held 9 to 12 months ahead of the exercise, depending on its type and size. At this meeting information is given to all exercise participants about the overall aims and other preconditions. The meeting can be carried out via skype or video conferencing to save time and other resources.

Exercise planning is done through a series of one to three (depending on the type and complexity of the exercise) planning conferences. These are prepared and led by the host nation (if a multi- or bilateral exercise). All countries and major organisations that are going to participate in the exercise are invited to the planning conferences. *However, it should be understood and accepted that not all organisations will be able to participate.* In large and complex exercises, the participants in the planning conferences may be divided into working groups focusing for instance on staff exercises, wildlife exercises etc.

In the first planning conference, the development of the aims/sub-aims of the specific exercise is begun. These aims need to be concrete and measurable/observable, describing what is to be achieved. Each aim has one or several indicators and criteria for success attached to it. Each participating actor is encouraged to develop their own exercise aims. This can be done in-between planning conferences one and two. During that time the lead nation (or a multiorganisational/multinational working group) continues developing the aims, scenario and design of the exercise.

At the second planning conference the aims, including the aims of the participating organisations, are decided. Furthermore, the scenario and exercise design are finalised.

The last planning conference deals with the practical aspects of the exercise, including transports, logistics, timeline of simulated actions/reactions etc. The exercise documentation (exercise plan, exercise management plan, evaluation plan etc.) is finalised.

The planning process above is suited for a large-scale exercise. For smaller exercises, for instance a table-top exercise with a limited scenario, it needs to be revised and down-sized. This can be done by reducing the number of planning conferences, by using telephone video conferences and by compressing the planning timeline.

An especially important aspect in the planning of exercises on the shore are the practical issues regarding cross-border passing, customs, insurances and logistics. These issues are more complex and in many cases more sensitive in operations on the shore than in operations at sea. However, exercises that reflect the potential real needs of the host nation may help pave the way for the request and use of these also in a real crisis situation.

Evaluation

Evaluation is a vital tool for determining the fulfilment of the exercise aims but also the efficiency of the exercise. The evaluation provides input for the improvement of the concepts and procedures for response operations as well as for the improvement of the design, planning and direction of future exercises. The conclusions from the evaluation are used to update the HELCOM RESPONSE Manual, including the chapter on exercises, and as an input when discussing aims and design of future exercises.

An Exercise Evaluation Team (EET) is established at the start of the exercise project to form an integral part of the exercise organisation. The EET gives advice on the planning of the exercise, to ensure that the exercise design allows for the measurements and observations needed in the evaluation.

In a national or sub-national exercise, the EET is in most cases made up by national experts and analysts. They normally report to the authority leading the exercise. The host nation is invited to report a summary of the most important lessons and conclusions to the HELCOM RESPONSE Group. In a bi-lateral exercise, the EET is normally made up by representatives from both participating countries.

In a multinational exercise, a multinational EET is preferred. For regularly reoccurring exercises the EET consists of representatives from the preceding, current and succeeding host nation. This will help improving the implementation of conclusions. The EET in a multinational exercise reports to the HELCOM RESPONSE Group.

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Evaluations need to be well prepared. A precondition for good evaluations are well defined aims. Measurement points as well as measurement criteria, based on the indicators of the exercise aims, are analysed and decided in advance by the EET. Generally the evaluation will focus on the exercise sub-aims and on the exercise efficiency.

The EET will have a group of observers following the exercise, observing and measuring the predefined indicators. Furthermore, each exercise should arrange an after-exercise review session for a hot wash-up of comments on both the exercise design and the exercise results. The analysed results from a multinational HELCOM exercise on the shore should be submitted to the HELCOM RESPONSE Group in a written report no later than two months after the end of the exercise.

The report should, as a minimum, cover the following items:

(1) Description of the exercise

- aims and sub-aims
- what strategic development objective(s) it supports
- scenario
- design
- names of participating Parties and organisations with a description of participating units and items from each Party/organisation
- date and period of exercise
- a brief description of the main events and other important factors influencing the exercise (such as for instance weather)
- a short description of the planning and preparation of the exercise, including relevant references

(2) Evaluation design

- overall focus of the evaluation
- analysis of the exercise aims, development of indicators and criteria of success, identification of measurement/observation points.

(3) Evaluation of exercise aim

- aim 1
 - Measurements/observations
 - Analysis
 - Conclusions
- aim X
 - Measurements/observations
 - Analysis
 - Conclusions

(4) The After Action Seminar

A brief summary of comments received at the After Action Seminar.

- on the planning, preparation, design and direction of the exercise
- on the fulfilment of the aims: were they fulfilled and how/why (why not)
- any other comments of value to the future development of operations and exercises

(5) Analysis and conclusions

- fulfilment of the aims, and what remains
- efficiency of the planning, preparation, design and direction of the exercise
- analysis of any focus areas especially pointed out by the HELCOM RESPONSE Group and not included in the aims (e.g. command, coordination etc.)
- suggestions and recommendations on how to improve exercises in the future
- suggestions and recommendation on how to improve operational procedures and the HELCOM RESPONSE Manual