



After-Action Report/Improvement Plan

10/15/2013

The After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) aligns exercise objectives with preparedness doctrine to include the National Preparedness Goal and related frameworks and guidance. Exercise information required for preparedness reporting and trend analysis is included; users are encouraged to add additional sections as needed to support their own organizational needs.

EXERCISE OVERVIEW

Exercise Name	Flu at the Zoo II
Exercise Dates	08/20-22/2013
Scope	This exercise was a “table-top” conducted between 08/20-22/2013 as an internet exercise. Exercise play was targeted for leadership personnel with prior Incident Command System (ICS) training from aquarium and zoological institutions located within the State of Illinois.
Mission Area(s)	Response and Recovery.
Core Capabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emergency Public Information and Warning• On-site Incident Management• Responder Safety & Health
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assess the participant’s basic knowledge of the use of the ICS approach and vocabulary post ICS training (ICS 100 & 200) offered in June 2013• Confirm the communication streams and systems that are expected to occur and be utilized between agencies involved in an outbreak• Determine the acceptability and ease of use of internet-based exercises within the zoological community
Threat or Hazard	Foreign Animal Disease threat to captive wildlife.
Scenario	A scenario was developed that required Illinois zoological personnel and their partner regulatory agencies to respond to a simulated outbreak of avian influenza in captive wildlife.
Sponsor	USDA, APHIS, Animal Care
Participating Organizations	The participants in the internet exercise represented zoos, State and Federal agencies and other stakeholders. The zoological staff playing in the exercise participated in the Flu II ICS 100 & 200 FEMA compliant training held in

Bloomington, IL in June 2013. Most zoological players came from the 8 Association of Zoos and Aquariums accredited facilities located in Illinois.

The Illinois State Veterinarian, USDA, APHIS & Animal Care Staff also participated in the exercise. There were also additional players and observers from the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services.

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ANALYSIS OF CORE CAPABILITIES

Aligning exercise objectives and core capabilities provides a consistent taxonomy for evaluation that transcends individual exercises to support preparedness reporting and trend analysis. Table 1 includes the exercise objectives, aligned core capabilities, and performance ratings for each core capability as observed during the exercise and determined by the evaluation team.

Objective	Core Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to be Performed (U)
<input type="checkbox"/> Assess the participants basic knowledge of the use of an ICS approach for organizing a disease response	Operational Coordination		(S)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Confirm the communication streams and systems that are expected to occur and be utilized between agencies involved in an outbreak	Public Information & Warning		(S)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Assess the participants basic knowledge of the use of an ICS approach for organizing a disease response	Responder Health & Safety		(S)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Determine the acceptability	Operational Coordination		(S)		

Objective	Core Capability	Performed without Challenges (P)	Performed with Some Challenges (S)	Performed with Major Challenges (M)	Unable to be Performed (U)
and ease of use of internet-based exercises within the zoological community.					
<p>Ratings Definitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performed without Challenges (P): The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws. • Performed with Some Challenges (S): The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s) and did not negatively impact the performance of other activities. Performance of this activity did not contribute to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers, and it was conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws. However, opportunities to enhance effectiveness and/or efficiency were identified. • Performed with Major Challenges (M): The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were completed in a manner that achieved the objective(s), but some or all of the following were observed: demonstrated performance had a negative impact on the performance of other activities; contributed to additional health and/or safety risks for the public or for emergency workers; and/or was not conducted in accordance with applicable plans, policies, procedures, regulations, and laws. • Unable to be Performed (U): The targets and critical tasks associated with the core capability were not performed in a manner that achieved the objective(s). 					

Table 1. Summary of Core Capability Performance

The following sections provide an overview of the performance related to each exercise objective and associated core capability, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement.

- *Objective 1: Assess the participants' basic knowledge of the use of an ICS approach for organizing a disease response.*

Operational Coordination

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

- **Strength 1:** There was generally a good basic knowledge by participants of the Incident Command System (ICS). Participants embraced its use during the exercise.
- **Strength 2:** The ICS framework was successfully demonstrated as a tool to organize and manage the staff of both large & small institutions.
- **Strength 3:** Based upon the threat, most zoos recognized the need to appropriately scale up biosecurity during a disease outbreak.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

- **Area for Improvement 1:** No discussions were recorded with regard to the need for planning projections & analysis.
- **Area for Improvement 2:** There was no mention of the use of ICS forms during the exercise.
- **Area for Improvement 3:** The need for improvements in interagency communication and coordination was an additional observation.

Reference: National Incident Management System (NIMS)

Analysis: Improvement in these areas would be accomplished with additional and more advanced ICS training and exercise participation.

- *Objective 2: Confirm the communication streams and systems that are expected to occur and be utilized between agencies involved in an outbreak.*

Public Information & Warning

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

- **Strength 1:** All of the zoological institutions recognized the need to designate a Public Information Officer (PIO) at the onset of the exercise.
- **Strength 2:** Zoological personnel seemed very familiar with dealing with the media & conveying information to the public.
- **Strength 3:** All zoos seemed to have the capacity to monitor/use social media and respond to related issues.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

- **Area for Improvement 1:** Some zoos seemed unaware of the need to coordinate with the JIC or lead agency PIO in the early stages of the exercise for guidance on information releases.
- **Area for Improvement 2:** The need for improvements in interagency communication and coordination was an additional observation.

Reference: National Incident Management System

Analysis: Improvement in these areas would be accomplished with additional and more advanced ICS training and exercise participation. Zoological participants appeared to have varying levels of the understanding of communication procedures in the event of a Foreign Animal Disease outbreak.

- *Objective 3: Access the participants' basic knowledge of the use of an ICS approach for organizing a disease response.*

Responder Health & Safety

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

- **Strength 1:** Every participating zoo recognized the need to activate the Safety Officer position.
- **Strength 2:** Most, if not all of the zoos identified public health & safety as an issue not just for staff, but for guests/visitors as well.
- **Strength 3:** All identified the need to coordinate with and receive information from government officials for guidance on safety & bio-security issues.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

- **Area for Improvement 1:** Zoo personnel need more information and training on the methods to acquire critical resources during an event from all levels of government.
- **Area for Improvement 2:** Many zoos tasked the Safety Officer with the task of acquiring and distributing PPE instead of a Logistics Section Chief (LSC).
- **Area for Improvement 3:** Players need to more generally become aware of the agencies & organizations who would likely be staffing the Unified Command structure managing the disease outbreak.

Reference: National Incident Management System

Analysis: Improvement in these areas would be accomplished with additional and more advanced ICS training and exercise participation.

- **Objective 4: Determine the acceptability and ease of use of internet-based exercises within the zoological community**

Operational Coordination

Strengths

The partial capability level can be attributed to the following strengths:

- **Strength 1:** An internet-based exercise allows for more participation due to budget limitations reducing the ability for stakeholders to attend in person exercises.
- **Strength 2:** The exercise prompted additional thought about preparedness at the participating institutions.
- **Strength 3:** The participants determined the questions posed during the exercise were clear and allowed room for detailed feedback and response.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

- **Area for Improvement 1:** It would be helpful if the exercise platform posted comments in the conversation thread as opposed to the order in which they were posted. Keeping the threads together prevents you from having to scroll through a lot of material to determine the comment reference.
- **Area for Improvement 2:** There should be more dialog between modules and between institutions.
- **Area for Improvement 3:** Local and State Emergency Management personnel should be recruited for the planning team to develop additional questions for exercise participants.

Reference: National Incident Management System

Analysis: Improvement in these areas would be accomplished with additional and more advanced ICS training and exercise participation. Adjustments to the internet platform which hosted the exercise can be made to increase the ease of use for future exercises.

APPENDIX A: IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This IP has been developed for the zoos and aquariums that participated in the Flu at the Zoo II exercise conducted on 8/20-22/2013.

Core Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Capability Element ¹	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
Core Capability 1: Onsite Incident Management	1. Discussion during the exercise did not include the need for planning projections and analysis	Recommend that zoological institutions continue ICS training to become familiar with forms and planning	training	USDA, AZA	Jeleen Briscoe Steve Olson	October 1, 2013	Sept 24, 2014
		Require the use of basic ICS forms in future exercises	exercise	U of I	Yvette Johnson-Walker and planning team	October 1, 2013	Sept 24, 2014
	2. Zoos should continue to do more specific and detailed emergency planning	Institutions should be encouraged to review and update their emergency plans prior to the next exercise. This element will be emphasized in upcoming exercises	planning	U of I	Yvette Johnson-Walker and Planning Team	October 1, 2013	Sept 24, 2014
		Improve the next exercise to challenge zoos to refer to their own specific incident	exercise	U of I	Yvette Johnson-Walker and planning team	October 1, 2013	Sept 24, 2014

¹ Capability Elements are: Planning, Organization, Equipment, Training, or Exercise.

Core Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Capability Element ²	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
		management plans to expose gaps in planning					
Core Capability 1: Responder Safety and Health	1. Zoos need to be more aware of agencies and organizations involved in a Unified Command structure managing a disease outbreak	In the next exercise, challenge participants to include additional stakeholders in their Unified command structure	exercise	U of I	Yvette Johnson-Walker and planning team	October 1, 2013	Sept 24, 2014
	2. Zoo personnel need more information/training on acquiring critical resources during an event from all levels of government.	Provide information to players about materials sourcing and include injects that require players to seek additional sources of materials.	Training, exercise	U of I USDA	Yvette Johnson-Walker and planning team	October 1, 2013	Sept 24, 2014
Core Capability	Issue/Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	Capability Element ³	Primary Responsible Organization	Organization POC	Start Date	Completion Date
Core Capability 1: Emergency Public Information and Warning	1. Some zoos were unaware of the need for coordination of messaging thru a JIC	Spend more time emphasizing the JIC in future Flu II ICS training opportunities	training	U of I	Yvette Johnson-Walker and planning team	October 1, 2013	Sept 24, 2014
		Incorporate more about JIC integration and importance in	exercise	U of I	Yvette Johnson-Walker and	October 1, 2013	Sept 24, 2014

² Capability Elements are: Planning, Organization, Equipment, Training, or Exercise.

³ Capability Elements are: Planning, Organization, Equipment, Training, or Exercise.

		upcoming exercises			planning team		
	2. There is a need for improvement in interagency communication and coordination	With the next exercise, include other players and their roles to make it a more realistic animal disease event	exercise	U of I, State Veterinarian, USDA	Yvette Johnson-Walker and planning team	October 1, 2013	Sept 24, 2014

APPENDIX B: EXERCISE PARTICIPANTS

Participating Organizations	
Federal	
USDA, APHIS, Animal Care	
USDA, APHIS, Veterinary Services	
State of Illinois	
Illinois Department of Agriculture	
Illinois State Veterinarian	
University of Illinois, College of Veterinary Medicine	
Organizations	
Association of Zoos and Aquariums	
[Zoos & Aquariums]	
Eight Association of Zoos and Aquariums accredited facilities located in Illinois.	