

Worksheet 10: Scenario Exercises

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Introduction

The [Emergency Response Planning Manual](#) describes three steps that provide heritage institutions with a structured framework for ensuring they can access the resources needed for effective response to emergencies. Step 3 called “[Provide adequate training for responders](#)” helps ensure that your key resource, your team, has practised making response decisions before an emergency occurs. This worksheet provides a framework for conducting simple scenario exercises and can also serve as a record of each exercise.

Instructions

Task 1. Define an emergency scenario

Schedule a meeting with your team. Record the date and participants’ names in the worksheet if you want a record of the exercise.

Define an emergency for the exercise either prior to or at the beginning of the meeting and record the details in the worksheet. Choose an emergency from the list below or make up your own based on experience or the results of your risk assessment exercise in [Worksheet 4: Emergency Risk Assessment](#).

- Water leaks from the ceiling due to a poorly maintained roof.
- Water accumulates on the floor to 1 cm due to a burst plumbing pipe.
- Water sprays across the room from a burst plumbing pipe and drips through the floor into rooms below.
- Water condenses on the ceiling due to a heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) system malfunction.
- Fire in a room triggers sprinklers and causes smoke, soot and water damage.
- A tree falls on the building due to severe winds.

- Torrential rain floods lower-level rooms.
- Snow melt and heavy rain cause overland flooding on your site.
- The roof collapses under a heavy snow load.
- Hurricane winds and rain cause flooding of lower-level rooms.
- A tornado damages a corner of the building's roof.
- Severe smoke from a wildland fire enters the building.
- An evacuation alert has been issued for your area due to a nearby wildland fire.

Choose an emergency randomly (for example, use dice or a digital picker wheel) or simply choose one that worries you the most. Use a different emergency for each exercise to explore the implications specific to each.

Then without overthinking it, select a weekday, month and time of day (morning, afternoon, evening, overnight) to describe when the emergency occurs. If you like, select a compatible wild card, that is, something that coincides with the emergency that may affect your options for the response. Choose randomly from the list below or make up your own. Document your choices in the worksheet if you want a record.

- Your director is on vacation and out of the country.
- The power is out and will not be restored soon.
- It is -25°C outside.
- It is 30°C outside, and the air conditioning is not working.
- The elevator is out of service.
- A temporary exhibition is expected to be delivered tomorrow.
- A temporary exhibition is scheduled to open the day after tomorrow.
- Flooding has affected a third of the town.

As a group, visualize the emergency happening at your institution. Answer the questions below to guide your thinking.

- Which building is affected (choose one if you have several)?
- Which area(s) in your building is (are) affected?
- Are collection objects or records present in the area?
- Who would likely find the problem?
- Who needs to be contacted?
- What other details may affect response?

Record your answers in the worksheet table if you want a record of the scenario.

You may wish to fill out (and thus test) an initial damage assessment form, such as the one provided in the [Emergency Plan Template](#), to sketch out the details. If you have a copy of floor plans for your building, use coloured markers to illustrate where water, soot or damage would be located.

Task 2. Prepare an emergency response task matrix

This exercise provides good, all-round practice in emergency response decision making. Use the worksheet table provided below or create a similar matrix using sticky notes, flip chart paper or a whiteboard. Complete the following steps for the chosen emergency:

- Identify tasks that need to be done.
- Indicate who on the incident management team is responsible; for example, use distinct colours to highlight each role.
- Name specific actions when describing collections salvage (consult Table 13 in the Emergency Response Planning Manual).
- Be specific: describe what, where and how for each task whenever possible.
- Place each task on the matrix across from an appropriate objective and under the approximate time period.
- Align tasks that can be done concurrently (fully or partially) and stagger those that must be done sequentially (one completed before the next starts).
- Keep adding tasks until all objectives are adequately addressed.

The closer your discussion is to what it would be in a real incident, the more benefit in terms of improved decision-making skills. So, make the most of each discussion no matter how short. Make assumptions based on your experience where necessary. Highlight questions when you are not sure what should be done and follow up to find answers later.

Worksheet

Emergency scenario

Meeting date	
Participants	
Emergency	
Emergency wild card	
Weekday	
Month	
Time of day	
Affected building	
Affected area(s)	
Objects in the affected area(s)	
Person who finds the problem	
People to be contacted	
Other relevant details	

Emergency response task matrix

Emergency objective	Immediate response	First hour	First day	Later
Protect people.				
Coordinate the responders.				
Secure the site.				
Limit the damage.				
Save the collections.				
Restore the building.				
Obtain supplies and equipment.				
Inform the relevant publics.				
Document the incident.				
Pay for it all.				

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