

Virtual Table Top Exercise (VTTX) - Tornado After-Action Report (AAR)

Overview

Date/Time:	April 30, 2015; 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
Location:	Oklahoma City-County Health Department, NE Regional Health and Wellness Campus at 2600 NE 63rd, Oklahoma City
Description:	The discussion-based VTTX format involved key personnel discussing simulated scenarios in an informal setting. Lead facilitation for the exercise was coordinated by EMI, with local facilitation provided by the Long-term Area Recovery Committee (LARC) and the Oklahoma County Local Emergency Planning Committee.
Exercise Design	<p>Video-Teleconference (VTC) technology distinguishes VTTX from other Tabletop exercises and allows responders across the Nation to simultaneously participate in a no fault, hazard-specific facilitated discussion. EMI coordinates via VTC allowing common delivery of exercise materials, scenarios, modules, and discussion questions among exercise participants at each VTC site. The VTTX was supported by an Exercise and Coordination Facilitation Guide, including logistical information, facilitation, and hot wash instructions. The VTTX consisted of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A hazard awareness briefing on the scenario hazard. • Three discussion modules presented by the EMI facilitator. • Local discussion with guided questions facilitated by an on-site facilitator. • Brief-outs from each participating location after each module. • Hot wash at each location following the VTC and a compiled AAR provided to participants.
Mission Areas:	Response & Recovery
Core Capabilities:	Planning, Public Information and Warning, Operational Coordination, Infrastructure Systems, Mass Care Services, Situational Assessment, Economic Recovery, and Health and Social Services
Objectives:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Test participant knowledge, skills, and abilities to effectively conduct all-hazards emergency response and recovery. 2. Enable participants to better coordinate response operations with counterparts from Federal agencies, State governments, local governments, private sector organizations, and nongovernmental agencies. 3. Allow participating locations to share real-time Tornado related preparation, response and recovery solutions with all participants.
Threat/Hazard:	Tornado
Scenario:	The VTTX was designed around the realistic scenario of a Tornado and adapted to the central Oklahoma area by the local facilitators.
Sponsors:	FEMA - EMI, Oklahoma County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), and Long-term Area Recovery Committee (LARC)
Points of Contact:	FEMA - EMI: Douglas M. Kahn at douglas.kahn@fema.dhs.gov or 301-477-7645 OK County LEPC: Lisa Kuefler, lisa.kuefler.1@us.af.mil , 405-734-3513 LARC: Caroline Wiegman, coordinator@oklarc.org , 405-514-1054

Participants:

- David Barnes, Oklahoma County
- Frank Barnes, City of Oklahoma City
- Jerry Bower, Oklahoma City-County Health
- Mike Bower, Midwest City
- John Call, Stress Response Team, OK Medical Reserve Corps
- Rhlonda Carey, Oklahoma Emergency Management
- Rebecca Dallen, City of Oklahoma City, Public Works-Storm Water Quality
- Dorothy Dunn, City of Oklahoma City 911 Communications
- James Fitzpatrick, Oklahoma City Community College
- Erich Font, Central OK Habitat for Humanity
- Glenda Ford-Lee, Oklahoma State Department of Health
- Anna Fullington, Heartline 2-1-1
- Mary Hughes Gaudreau, Oklahoma Conference of Churches
- Dara Hays, Oklahoma Emergency Management
- Chris Hearn, Central OK Habitat for Humanity
- Shelli Holtsman, ODMHSAS OK Strong
- Anetra House, Mental Health Association Oklahoma
- Lucien Jones , City of Oklahoma City Public Safety Communications
- Michael Kimball, City of Oklahoma City
- Jason Knight, City of Oklahoma City
- Ann Kueteman, Episcopal Diocese of Oklahoma
- Lisa Kuefler, Tinker AFB Emergency Mgmt
- Jim Linn, City of Oklahoma City
- Mike Magee, City of Edmond
- Paulette Marshall, Oklahoma State Department of Health
- Charles McBride, Oklahoma National Guard
- Jeff Niemen, Lutheran Social Services Disaster Response
- Luke Pratt, Oklahoma Conference of the United Methodist Church
- Linda Pryor, Oklahoma State Emergency Management
- Stephen Rasbold, Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma, Inc.
- Jeff Renner, American Red Cross
- Christy Roney, Central Oklahoma Habitat for Humanity
- Marlene Shugart, Oklahoma City Community College
- Tom Thomson, Oklahoma Dept of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services
- Debi Wagner, City of Moore
- Greg Whitworth, Oklahoma County
- Caroline Wiegman, Long-term Area Recovery Committee (LARC)
- Dave Williams, Oklahoma Small Business Development Center
- Brian Wolff, Serve Moore
- Jackie Wright, Oklahoma Emergency Management
- Kristy Yager, City of Oklahoma City
- Zach Nash, City of Oklahoma City
- Jami Murphy, Oklahoma Dept of Environmental Quality
- Blaine Bolding, Oklahoma City-County Health

The following information was compiled from the Participant Feedback Forms completed by the exercise attendees.

Functional Strengths:

- Communications methods and technology are very robust
- Strong volunteer groups are available to assist
- Existing partnerships/relationships
- Large amount of agencies, public & private, involved in relief efforts
- Willingness to partner and train with volunteer agencies and learn new things
- Good working relationship/collaboration between state, local & VOADs
- Multidiscipline participation provided different perspectives and understanding of global issues and community best practices for response and recovery
- Local public safety agencies - city, county, state, and federal - network and train together
- Experience/capabilities
- Strong sense of preparedness in the Oklahoma City area.
- Large amount of excellent resources available in Oklahoma to response to severe weather events
- OK community works well together to support those affected by disaster
- Experience, resources built as a result/access-i.e. MERC
- Personnel willing to share their real world experience with other participating agencies
- Oklahoma has had much practice that has refined all processes and practices.
- Great mutual aid compacts available
- Experience, plans put in place based on past disaster, existing partnerships/relationships
- Public notifications through new technology (i.e. Lamar signs, social media, mobile apps)
- Timings and methods of warning/notification for severe weather in OK
- Physical recovery [versus emotional or spiritual recovery]

Functional Needs Improvement:

- Communication between government agencies & VOADs lacking
- Communication needs to be improved. Create a way for all agencies to communicate with one another quickly and efficiently
- Failover and backup capabilities of 800 mhz systems need review
- Information sharing between governmental entities and public during recovery lacking
- Lacking cross jurisdictional communications (ability to communicate and messaging means; city to city, city to state, city to private entities)
- Mental health during response and recovery
- Lack of funding for mental health outreach when FEMA grants are not triggered
- Need pre-established mutual aid agreements statewide
- Need a state wide mutual aid agreement
- Improve collaboration between private, public, and volunteer agencies
- Improve operational coordination
- Improve interaction between local, state, and volunteer agencies.
- Improve regional cooperation
- Lack of documentation pre/post disaster
- Wider dissemination of information regarding available programs
- Better coordination of self-dispatching services, especially VOAD sub-services
- Most organizations have their own mobility plan, but not well communicated.

- Need to improve communications to public-have a consistent message from all agencies (i.e. messaging, social media, other means)
- Lack of messaging in additional languages including American Sign Language (ASL)
- Clearer transition to and between stages of response to recovery
- Need to thoroughly discuss tangible steps that take us into recovery
- Integrating end of response and startup of recovery could be improved.
- Volunteer Management (spontaneous unaffiliated volunteers (SUV))
- Donations Management
- Managing convergence issues - spontaneous unaffiliated volunteer management

Functional - Improvement Plan-Corrective Action Recommendations; Recommended Assignment:

- Develop a consistent messaging across all jurisdictions that help get consistent messaging out; OEM
- Include communications personnel in briefings and debriefings; Supervisors
- Consistent and unified message across agencies; All
- Include local emergency management agencies on early state VOAD calls; VOAD
- OKVOAD communication committee develop sharing format during response/relief/recovery for orgs to more formally share activities & resources; OKVOAD Comm Committee
- Create more cross jurisdictional communications plans
- Identify a mobile app to manage disaster information-specifically damage assessment; OK County EM
- Include failover/backup system capabilities in Radio Frequency Plan for new radio system; OKC Communications-Radio Manager
- Review OKC ESF# 6 (Mass Care, Emergency Assistance, Housing, and Human Services)
- Define role of state EOC and local EOC/MACC in the coordination of NGOs, VOAD, and faith based delivery of services for operational coordination
- Include key stakeholders in organizational meetings to assist in coordination and ensure everyone has an understanding of the appropriate response needed.
- Work with VOADs to form resource centers that will help with volunteer management.
- Provide more training on badging system to better track resources--work with partner agencies to get responders badged to track man hours for reimbursement.; OK County EM
- Provide additional volunteer training classes related to the structure of a response and responsibilities; OK County EM/FD
- Improve coordination of supporting agencies through controlling entities; OEM
- Increase municipal and health involvement with long term recovery.
- Have a representative from health that could be at the planning meetings/briefings;
- Local emergency managers not included on early OK VOAD conference calls; VOAD
- Facilitation at the state level similar to NIMS credentialing and incident management teams to push resource identification; OEM
- Identifying resources available for relief. ; Each organization
- Reach out to include city EMs with VOAD groups; VOAD
- Improve planning efforts for dealing with spontaneous unaffiliated volunteers
- Clarify documentation requirements for local jurisdictions (federal declarations and other); OEM
- Educational events to share information with partner agencies regarding capabilities, resources, and communication processes.; OK LARC/OEM
- Review disaster damage assessment portion of EOP; OKC EM

- Review EOPs, local volunteer management plans, local donations management plans, and documentation practices.
- Review EOP, debris management plans, individual discipline operational/response plans; All
- All policies and procedures should be in constant review for correctness and any need for revisions or identification of new EOP's etc. developed
- Review EOPs to include supporting at-risk populations and multilingual communities; Partner with Functional Assessment Support Team (FAST), DHS, for profit, non-profit, language contacts.
- Revise local disaster spontaneous volunteer management plan and process; OKVOAD, COEMA, OEM
- Review asset protection plan (resources=equipment, personnel, & supplies) for response to recovery;
- Review communications plans for interoperability, chain of command, and use of volunteers
- Create and maintain a forum where national, state, & local groups can communicate with one another
- Develop/continue/participate multi-disciplinary exercises specifically focused upon VOAD agencies (with EM & city/OK officials present); OEM
- Further discussion in more detail of the mental health support in recovery for community members, first responders, and those providing services in all steps of the process. ; Mental Health Association of Oklahoma
- Organize networking events to meet response and recovery group that may not normally interact (local resources and State agencies); Local COADs
- OKC Communications review existing equipment and procedures; OKC Communications-Radio Manager
- Meet with emotional and spiritual care providers to improve communication flow; Oklahoma Conference of Churches
- Review ESF #14 (Long-Term Community Recovery?)--Coordination of VOAD activity and information sharing.
- Volunteer and donations management plan at the state level to more efficiently utilize these resources.; OEM/OK VOAD
- Seek alternative non FEMA funding sources for mental health outreach;
- Share resource listing with participating agencies ; OK LARC/OK Co. LEPC
- Newly minted or little known programs (housing, stress response teams, etc) should be widely acknowledged for use by local incident command teams
- Improve understanding of "launch" codes (activation and response triggers);
- PIO/duty officer reference book take steps to increase awareness; OEM
- Develop a statewide mutual aid agreement; OEM
- Meeting with local EMAs, ODEM, VOAD, faith based to define roles and reporting relationships; COEMA
- Include mental health coordination in response planning efforts
- Review OEM duty officer reference manual; OEM
- Review VOAD protocols and policies; VOAD
- Contact tree refinement; OEM
- Seek out all agencies and assistance sources to compile all resources to communicate to the public.; Heartline 2-1-1
- Increase number of bilingual personnel available at agencies providing services; All
- Increase number of digital signs in the OKC area.
- Enhance communications between government entities and the public by ensuring that daily recovery information is shared with PIO and then provided to the public in timely fashion; EMAs

- Improve management of social media---use door listing and geo targeting; All
- Increase information outreach to survivors following disaster; All
- Continue to develop brochures & other means of information to provide legal advice regarding recovery/relief efforts and avoiding/mitigating legal issues; Legal Aid Services Oklahoma
- Create more multilingual/American Sign Language (ASL) messaging; All
- OWD Siren Policy
- Review PIO awareness campaign; OEM PIO
- At risk population coordination to close language gaps and increase awareness/response in OKC; Partner with Functional Assessment Support Team (FAST), DHS, for profit, non-profit, language contacts.
- Develop plans to recover in a way that makes the community more resilient.
- Finding positions to be involved in transition from initial disaster to long term recovery; Habitat for Humanity
- Prioritize transition to long term recovery. Identify people and organizations that would facilitate other organizations that serve public need.
- Identifying end ICS-->continuing volunteer relief-->transition to recovery *Needs to be identified when & how ending, what resources are available during relief operations and what is available during recovery--> how does recovery happen; Each organization

Technical/Exercise Strengths:

- Many knowledgeable participants and experts
- Very experienced & knowledgeable leaders
- Good representation of organizations, important for information sharing
- Networking with other agency leaders
- Nice mixture of professionals at each table
- Multidisciplinary involvement (Met new responders face to face, met responder groups that we do not normally work with)
- Coordination between responders
- Good integration of agencies within groups
- Shared EM info with VOAD Partners
- Multidisciplinary representation was excellent and important!
- Local communities are becoming more & more aware and prepared for Disaster response. Education and experience has become clear
- Was great that we had so many NGOs present! Let's bring in more (ARC, etc) for every exercise!
- Networking with State partners refreshing/revisiting issues
- Realistic scenario; Good exercise
- The exercise was realistic for our area
- Other than EF scale and tornado watch/warning details, rest of scenario looked good.
- Good key issues
- Overall, very thorough exercise! Thank you!!
- The TTX itself was very helpful regarding local/state resources
- Great table discussions
- Good questioning and sharing of answers
- I thought it went well overall once we understood the process, things seemed to flow better
- Schedule was good
- Key issues where good

- Use of technology to make this presentation valuable
- These are good/simple exercises that often spark conversations
- Good choice of effective table leaders
- Facilitators were well prepared
- Great job by facilitators
- Great exercise!
- Very well organized
- A big thanks to those who coordinated this TTX in OKC
- Exercise well organized, hope to be invited to future exercises

Technical/Exercise Needs Improvement:

- Needed more first responders involved in the exercise
- The exercise was missing hospital and EMS reps
- Would have been good to have more suburbs participate
- Would appreciate a TTX specifically focused on VOAD agencies (w/ EM & city officials present)
- Needed reps from police, fire and EMS
- I would like more discussion on mental health support in Recovery for community, first responders,
- Questions not conducive to describing activities of voluntary agencies
- Take out FEMA; Make it more local
- Exercise was too broad
- Not sure we need input from other areas/states (too much time listening to other states with less relevant info to OK; took time away from processing what we could have done locally)
- IT issues
- This requires a face-to-face or protracted period of conversation
- Disappointed that FEMA could not keep their own technology working
- No dietary options for people with food allergies or issues
- Better, more readable mapping. Could not see exact defined path w/ streets & neighborhoods
- Some of the recovery assumptions were unrealistically optimistic (ex., 3 months to rebuild (even insured families are likely to wait 5-8 months for homes to be rebuilt, 3-4 months just to rebuild home)
- Mental health scenario was unrealistic (People do not typically seek MH services en masse, so being overwhelmed by MH calls is probably not going to happen. More realistically, people are 1st concerned with housing, safety, food, etc. Then, MH issues come later, as people slow down and have time to think about them)
- 3 months for people to build/rebuild homes is unrealistic. More like 6 months to 2 years
- Involve someone with a meteorology background in scenario development
- EF scale should have been used throughout.
- Tornado watch expired at time of tornado/wrong agency - SPC issues watches, NWS issues warnings
- Have a more realistic timeframe for rebuilding homes
- In the modules, questions can be broad/seem a bit much
- Unrealistic with time, dates, damage (i.e., debris mgmt cleanup 25% in a 24 hr period - not realistic in a major/dense area)
- Redundant questions
- Questions seemed very theory based - not applicable
- Where are references to tribal & access/functional needs
- Question were more theory geared vs application/practical

- More time for answering questions and back briefing main group
- Probably needs less sharing of answers nationally (waste of time)
- Too much time listening to video
- FEMA did not seem to allow time to be prepared for reporting out. Need to scale back how much to cover or allow more time
- Covered too much in too little time

Technical/Exercise Improvement Plan-Corrective Action Recommendations:

- Get the word out (re: more suburbs participating)
- Consider who group members are (re broad questions)
- Have each location share only one answer (like we did here)
- Make necessary improvements to IT issues
- Eliminate the FEMA part. Just have an OKC/County MGT
- Next time trade up groups for each module for more input and collaboration across the spectrum
- Recommend this should be regionally led: those are the immediate Federal partners to interact with states/locals
- Next time please include diet options for people with food allergies or issues (salad dressings all had milk content)
- More realistic questions more geared to application/practical
- Have an EM write a more realistic scenario
- Have the author of the exercise be representative of the type of disaster - understands the reality of impact of a tornado would engage time and resources
- Time allocation inadequate to accommodate large groups of participants
- Plan for a longer exercise period (re: Time allocation inadequate to accommodate large groups of participants)
- Need to scale back how much to cover or allow more time

Numerical Assessment of Exercise Design and Conduct (as indicated by participants):

1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)

Assessment Factor	1	2	3	4	5
The exercise was well structured and organized.	0	0	4	16	14
The exercise scenario was plausible and realistic.	0	0	8	11	15
The multimedia presentation helped the participants understand and become engaged in the scenario.	0	4	12	10	7
The facilitators were knowledgeable about the material, kept the exercise on target, and were sensitive to group dynamics,	0	0	0	14	20
The Situation Manual used during the exercise was a valuable tool throughout the exercise.	0	0	4	14	16
Participation in the exercise was appropriate for someone in my position.	0	0	2	14	17
The participants included the right people in terms of level and mix of disciplines.	0	0	3	12	19

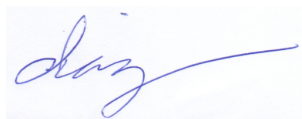
This After Action Report was compiled by Ms. Caroline Wiegman, Program Coordinator for the Long-term Area Recovery Committee (LARC) and Ms. Lisa Kuefler, Chairperson of the Oklahoma County Local Emergency Planning Committee. After reading over all participant feedback forms we believe the top three items for improvement are:

1. Continue the use of training and exercise to educate everyone that may have a part in a disaster in ICS and NIMS.
2. Review all plans that are in place. Including, but not limited to: EOPs, Debris Plans, SOPs, and SOGs. Ensure that
3. Increase opportunities for cross-sector networking and collaboration between public response and emergency planning agencies and voluntary organizations active in disaster.

We would like to thank all of the organizations that were represented at this exercise. This was a very beneficial exercise and we appreciated all of the diverse agency participation.

Sincerely,

Lisa Kuefler



Caroline Wiegman