

This FAQ covers ENISA's Good Practice Guide on National Exercises



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Why are national exercises so important?

Exercises are an important tool to assess preparedness of a community against natural disasters, technology failures and emergency situations. They enable authorities to target specific weaknesses, increase cooperation across the sector, identify interdependencies, stimulate improvements in continuity planning, and generate a culture of cooperative effort to boost resilience.

What are the benefits of the exercises within an organization?

The benefits of network security and resilience exercises are many. Within an organization, exercises ensure that staff are fully prepared and capable of responding to incidents by efficiently following business continuity. Disaster recovery procedures reveal weaknesses in those procedures, such as unexpected implications of a given type of incident, enabling managers to revise and improve the procedures

What about exercises between many organizations?

Many incidents affect more than one organization. Exercises across these organizations are an important way to ensure that communications and coordination procedures function correctly, and to ensure that all organizations are prepared to act as required.

By training together, the participating organizations can:

- ✓ identify interdependencies that they may not have been aware of.
- ✓ practice working together with their counterparts at other organizations.
- ✓ share best practices in their procedures.
- ✓ test whether their own procedures work well in practice.
- ✓ test emergency contact information and channels of communications across organizations.

- ✓ develop trust across organizations to jointly work toward more resilient networks.
- ✓ demonstrate preparedness to their customers, partners, and regulators.

How was the good practice guide developed?

The guide was prepared by surveying and interviewing public authorities, network operators, IT industry players, and network security experts about their experiences, expertise and recommendations for effective practices in planning and executing exercises.

In parallel to the survey and interviews, secondary research was conducted to identify exercises and practices in the critical information infrastructure sector in other regions of the world.

How will this good practice guide help to improve resilience in the EU?

The guide aims to support authorities that do not have significant experience in planning and executing exercises. The guide helps authorities to identify and develop the skills needed to select measures and processes to be tested, plan, execute and evaluate interdependencies focused exercises themselves. They also use this experience gained by the stakeholders to improve their measures and processes. These skills could potentially help these authorities to participate in pan-European exercises in this sector.

Are Member States already conducting exercises?

Yes, there are several Member States that have been conducting exercises for years, including a wide range of discussion-based exercises and operations-based exercises. As a result of these exercises, momentum and interest on exercises among relevant stakeholders is spreading.

What are the steps in planning and executing an exercise effectively?

To achieve success, it is necessary to carefully and diligently proceed through many individual steps, working out a huge amount of detail in the process, while balancing the sensitivities of various organizations and individuals who you would like to commit their time, resources, and attention. These numerous steps together form the life cycle of an exercise, which can be divided into four segments:



The report goes through each of these steps and gives detailed descriptions on what there is to think about in each of these exercise segments.

Is this guide intended only for Member States, or could it be used for regional or pan European exercises as well?

With this guide, ENISA has sought to help authorities in the ICT sector in EU Member States to build expertise in conducting exercises that will help to increase resilience of public eCommunications networks in each country. However, these skills are also intended to help these authorities as they prepare to participate in transnational exercises in this sector.

Actually, ENISA uses this guide to organise, plan and execute the first pan European exercise on CIIP related issues.

Can ENISA help me to use the good practice guide?

We are in contact with a number of Member States interested in developing expertise in national exercises. We try to persuade them for the benefits arising from such exercises. Additionally, we organise seminars where we train local, key staff about the way to organise, plan and conduct national exercises.

What are the benefits of regional or pan European exercises?

There are several reasons for conducting regional or pan European exercises. In particular, the nature of the infrastructure, organizations, and risks are no longer significantly constrained to or separated by borders. For example, communications networks, service providers, the users dependent on them and the threats to these networks and services are all increasingly international and interdependent.

Could you give some examples of national exercises?

At the annex of the good practice guide a list of national exercises are provided (e.g. IKT 08, Telö and others).

For full reports: <http://www.enisa.europa.eu/act/res/policies/good-practices-1/exercises>

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