

# GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES

## EXECUTIVE BRIEF

August 2013



*Cal* OES

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE  
OF EMERGENCY SERVICES



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**GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES**  
**EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

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# **GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES**

## **EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

California lives in the shadow of tremendous threats from natural and man-made disasters. It is a recognized leader in disaster prevention, protection, mitigation, response and recovery. A significant part of this preparedness effort is the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services' robust training and exercise program. This program is designed to meet the needs of the state's 58 counties, roughly 38 million residents, numerous tribal nations, and 10 major metropolitan areas. Working in concert with preparedness partners, the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services' (Cal OES) exercise program features the Governor's Annual Exercise Series, "Golden Guardian."

The focus of the Golden Guardian 2013 Exercise Series was a catastrophic earthquake on the San Andreas Fault modeled after the 1906 San Francisco event. Golden Guardian 2013 allowed local, state, federal, and private sector partners to train and exercise with the goal of evaluating and improving capabilities in all mission areas related to a catastrophic natural disaster in California. A successful Golden Guardian exercise series usually entails 12-18 months of planning, numerous exercises, and a wide range of participants. Cal OES conducts Golden Guardian based on the goals identified in California's Strategic Plan. The exercise series implements critical elements of the State of California Emergency Plan, the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), the National Preparedness Goal (NPG), the National Response Framework (NRF), and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Golden Guardian 2013 (GG13) consisted of a series of 10 building block exercises focused on the, "San Francisco Bay Area Earthquake Readiness Response: Concept of Operations Plan." These exercises were mutually agreed upon by the members of the exercise planning team (EPT), which was comprised of planners from Cal OES, FEMA Region IX, and other state and local partners. This GG13 Exercise Series Executive Brief will provide an overview of the following:

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Golden Guardian 2013 Purpose and Planning**
- 3. Golden Guardian 2013 Exercise Scenario**
- 4. Golden Guardian 2013 Exercise Objectives and Capabilities**
- 5. Golden Guardian 2013 Exercise Series Overview**
  - a. Golden Guardian 2013 Successes**
  - b. Golden Guardian 2013 Areas for Improvement**
- 6. Cal OES Exercise Program**

# **GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES**

## **EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

---

### **GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 PURPOSE AND PLANNING**

The Golden Guardian 2013 (GG13) Exercise Series was funded by the Homeland Security Grant Program and designed to familiarize local, state, and federal governments, and private sector partners on portions of the 2008 San Francisco Bay Area Earthquake Readiness Response: Concept of Operations Plan. The most important aspect of the exercise series was to raise awareness of key components of the plan and critical emergency management decision-making processes that would occur during a catastrophic earthquake. Planning for GG13 began in January of 2012 and ended with a Recovery Tabletop Exercise in June of 2013. GG13 was a comprehensive series of exercises that consisted of 10 synchronized building block exercises:

- Two Catastrophic Plans Seminars
  - State and Federal Agencies
  - Operational Areas and Bay Area Stakeholders
- Transportation Tabletop Exercise
- Situation Status Report Workshop
- Two Master Scenario Events Lists Workshops
  - State and Federal Agencies
  - Operational Areas and Bay Area Stakeholders
- Mass Care Tabletop Exercise
- Joint Action Planning Workshop
- State Operations Center Functional Exercise
- Recovery Tabletop Exercise

To successfully coordinate the exercise series, members of Cal OES' exercise program created an internal exercise planning team (IEPT) and worked regularly with subject matter experts and external partners for the various exercises. The IEPT conducted four planning conferences for the series, identified a Lead Exercise Planner, and a planning team for each build-up exercise. Subject matter experts and external partners were added to each individual planning team as needed. The IEPT worked closely with Operational Areas, non-governmental organizations, state and federal agencies and private sector partners throughout the planning process for the entire GG13 Exercise Series.

**GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES**  
**EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

---

## **GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SCENARIO**

GG13 utilized the capabilities-based planning methodology which allowed exercise participants to assess capabilities suitable for the wide range of threats and hazards they would experience during a catastrophic earthquake. In order to test these capabilities, the scenario used in the San Francisco Bay Area Earthquake Readiness Response: Concept of Operations was adopted as the baseline scenario. Slight additions and modifications were agreed upon by all stakeholders to accommodate a functional exercise to start play 49 hours after the initial earthquake. Starting the exercise at 49 hours after the earthquake allowed for the integration of local, state, federal, and private sector response operations.

At 9:05 A.M., on Monday May 13, 2013 a M7.8 earthquake strikes the San Andreas Fault with an epicenter located just outside the mouth of the San Francisco Bay, approximately 6 miles outside of the Golden Gate Bridge, and ruptures the San Andreas fault for approximately 300 miles from the San Juan Bautista area in the south to the Mendocino Triple Junction in the north.

The earthquake generates severe ground shaking and damage in 19 California counties, extending from Monterey to Humboldt, and into the San Joaquin Valley, with the greatest amount of damage affecting the urban areas of Oakland, San Francisco, San Jose, and Santa Rosa. All Operational Areas (OAs) activate their Emergency Operation Centers (EOCs) and respond to incidents within the impact zone. The State Operations Center is fully activated and the FEMA Region IX Incident Management Assistance Team has arrived to co-locate with the state until a Joint Field Office can be established near the impacted area.

The situation status as of hour 49 after the catastrophic earthquake is as follows:

- More than 500 fire ignitions
- Up to 50 million tons of debris created
- Number of households without potable water service:
  - Day 1: 1,828,000
  - Day 7: 1,279,00
  - Day 30: 256,000
- Number of households without electric power:
  - Day 1: 789,000
  - Day 7: 229,000
  - Day 30: 59,000
- Number, magnitude, and probability of aftershocks
  - 33 to 59 aftershocks of Mw >5—100% probability
  - 1 to 10 aftershocks of Mw >6—100% probability
  - 1 aftershock of Mw >7—50% probability
- 1,300 miles of road closures
- 600 bridges destroyed and 320 severely damaged
- 115,000 residential buildings destroyed or extensively damaged

## **GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

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- 10,000 commercial buildings destroyed or extensively damaged
- 12,300 people with serious injuries
- 1,700 people trapped and requiring rescue
- 3,300 fatalities
- 650,000 displaced individuals (assuming an average of 2.7 persons per household)
- Number of people requiring emergency shelter:
  - Day 1 to 7: 330,000
  - Day 15: 125,000 to 165,000
- 100,000 animals requiring shelter

### **GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 OBJECTIVES AND CAPABILITIES**

The Cal OES' Exercise Program utilizes a capabilities-based approach to exercise program management, foundation, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. Capabilities-based planning is defined as planning, under uncertainty, to build capabilities suitable for a wide range of threats and hazards while working within an economic framework that necessitates prioritization and choice. Capabilities-based planning addresses uncertainty by analyzing a wide range of realistic scenarios to identify required capabilities. It is the basis for guidelines such as the National Preparedness Goal, the Core Capabilities, and the Target Capabilities List (TCL). The Golden Guardian 2013 Exercise Series objectives were developed by exercise stakeholders based on input from senior leaders, and information in the San Francisco Bay Area Earthquake Readiness Response: Concept of Operations Plan. GG13 Exercise Series objectives were:

- Assess responding to a coastal region incident through the new State Operations Center (SOC) and Regional Emergency Operations Center (REOC) configuration
- Exercise Emergency Managers Mutual Aid (EMMA) procedures
- Exercise interface of Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) - Bay Area regional plans and state/federal plans:
  - *California Catastrophic Incident Base Plan: Concept of Operations*
  - *San Francisco Bay Area Earthquake Readiness Response: Concept of Operations Plan*
  - *San Francisco Bay Area Regional Emergency Coordination Plan*
- Exercise the new Emergency Management Information System
- Validate State Operations Center position training
- Discuss Recovery Issues
- Exercise State Emergency Function and Federal Emergency Support Function joint action planning

## GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES EXECUTIVE BRIEF

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The Golden Guardian 2013 Exercise Series incorporated the following Core and Target Capabilities:

Core Capability	Corresponding Target Capability
Planning	Planning
Operational Coordination	EOC Management
Public & Private Sector Resources	Critical Resources & Logistics Distribution
Mass Care Services	Mass Care
Infrastructure Systems	Restoration of Lifelines

### GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES OVERVIEW

The primary success of Golden Guardian 2013 was bringing together key Bay Area stakeholders, state agencies and federal partners for the 10 separate exercises to familiarize them with and improve their understanding of the San Francisco Bay Area Earthquake Readiness Response: Concept of Operations Plan. Summarized below are the successes and areas of improvement from the 10 Golden Guardian 2013 exercises.

#### *Golden Guardian 2013 Successes*

##### **Catastrophic Plan Seminars**

In August and November of 2012, Cal OES hosted two seminars to give stakeholders a better understanding of the San Francisco Bay Area Earthquake Readiness Response: Concept of Operations Plan. The seminars provided a framework for all stakeholders in the Bay Area, State Agencies, Federal Partners and Non-Governmental Organizations to discuss the emergency management processes needed to respond to and recover from a catastrophic earthquake. Important items addressed included coordination of response operations among the Operational Areas, Cal OES, and FEMA, as well as critical issues resulting from a catastrophic earthquake. Participants left the seminars with a greater understanding of the processes and procedures that are in place to provide a framework for working together and solving difficult resource coordination issues.

##### **Transportation Tabletop Exercise**

In December 2012, Cal OES, with generous support from PG&E, conducted a tabletop exercise in San Ramon to focus more closely on transportation issues expected after a catastrophic earthquake. It examined the ability of the Bay Area's transportation systems management agencies and mass transportation resource providers to communicate, set priorities, and provide resources to restore transportation system functionality and address emergency transportation needs. Participants came away with a better understanding of the complexity and challenges they would face after a catastrophic earthquake. There was a desire to continue planning efforts to resolve regional transportation issues during a disaster.

##### **Mass Care Tabletop Exercise**

In March 2013, Cal OES, with support from the American Red Cross Bay Area Chapter, conducted a tabletop exercise in Oakland to explore mass care issues resulting from a

## **GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES**

### **EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

---

catastrophic earthquake. Issues surrounding the need for mass sheltering, feeding and bulk distribution of resources were discussed. Participants came away with an understanding of the importance of including all stakeholders in mass care planning. The tremendous mass care needs resulting from this earthquake will necessitate the incorporation of responses from all aspects of the community, not just traditional mass care providers.

#### **Joint Action Planning Workshop**

The Joint Action Planning/Training Workshop in April 2013 provided an opportunity to bring the California State Emergency Function Leads together with their Federal Emergency Support Function counterparts to identify resource needs and how to coordinate the filling of the resulting resource requests. This was the first time that these groups had the opportunity to exercise and validate the joint action process. The workshop enhanced and spotlighted the importance of planning, coordination, and cooperation among participants at all levels to ensure that the State of California will continue to be a national preparedness leader. As a result of this Joint Action Planning/Training Workshop, the State of California and the federal agencies have a better understanding of preparedness required to respond to and recover from a catastrophic earthquake in California.

#### **State Operations Functional Exercise**

This May 2013 exercise was the capstone event for the Golden Guardian 2013 Exercise Series. This was a one day, eight hour, functional exercise involving the State Operations Center (SOC), State Agencies, FEMA Region IX Incident Management Assistance Team, State Emergency Functions and Federal Emergency Support Functions. Participants had an opportunity to experience their roles and responsibilities in the SOC 48 hours after a catastrophic earthquake in the San Francisco Bay Area. The exercise was conducted in a realistic operational setting in a safe, non-threatening environment.

#### **Recovery Tabletop Exercise**

In June 2013, Cal OES conducted a Recovery Tabletop Exercise providing an opportunity for Operational Areas, State Agencies and Federal partners to discuss key issues following a catastrophic earthquake. Participants took away a better understanding of the issues surrounding a catastrophic earthquake and the importance of having recovery plans.

### ***Golden Guardian 2013 Areas for Improvement***

#### **Plan Update and Maintenance**

Golden Guardian 2013 was able to raise the level of awareness of many stakeholders about the, San Francisco Bay Area Earthquake Readiness Response: Concept of Operations Plan. Throughout the exercise series, many participants identified the need to review and revise the plan. It was adopted in 2008 and since then two other catastrophic plans have been written. The concepts of joint action planning, task force planning, multi-agency coordination and emergency function/emergency support function coordination need to be strengthened and developed more fully in the plan. Periodic awareness seminars should be conducted to brief updates to the plan and receive feedback from stakeholders on improvements.

# GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES

## EXECUTIVE BRIEF

---

### **Mass Care Planning**

Mass Care sheltering, feeding and bulk distributions were identified by many Golden Guardian participants and senior leaders as important issues decision-makers will face in the event of a catastrophic earthquake. The need for shelter spaces will far out strip available spaces, necessitating plans to support those who shelter-in-place, those who choose to self-evacuate and those who need assistance to evacuate. It is recommended that Cal OES coordinates mass care planning on a regional level to address these issues.

### **Resource Coordination and Priority Setting**

Throughout the Golden Guardian 2013 Exercise Series, resource coordination was repeatedly identified to be of vital importance after a catastrophic earthquake in the San Francisco Bay Area. GG13 gave emergency managers and senior level decision-makers a feel for some of the challenges following the earthquake. The State needs to enhance its list of state agency resources and response teams by developing capability sets within each Emergency Function. While the catastrophic response plan emphasizes use of an Execution Checklist, it could be improved by also emphasizing the need for joint state-federal communications to ensure federal resources will be employed. It is recommended that Cal OES should take the opportunity to incorporate resource coordination, resource allocation and strategic-level priority setting into future training and exercises.

### **Logistics Planning**

The Golden Guardian 2013 Exercise Series identified the critical need for human and material resources after a catastrophic earthquake. The ability of local government to provide assistance to their populace will be greatly impacted by the availability and distribution of state and federal resources in a timely manner. It was further realized that there is a continued need for Points of Distribution (POD) planning with local officials to pre-determine which sites will be used, identify conflicts in the use of open space, and determine what capabilities should be planned for at the state and federal level to support local efforts. It is recommended that Cal OES conduct POD planning with Operational Areas; these efforts should also be coordinated on a regional level.

### **Transportation Planning**

Many participants during the Golden Guardian 2013 Exercise Series identified the restoration of lifelines as a high priority after a catastrophic earthquake of this nature. In order to formulate a comprehensive recovery plan, efforts to restore critical transit infrastructure should be prioritized. Priorities may differ from one region to the next so Cal OES should take the lead in planning on a regional basis to identify critical transportation infrastructure lifelines and their individual priorities for restoration.

### **Functional and Access Needs**

The Golden Guardian 2013 Exercise Series identified a shortfall in the provision of services to people with access and functional needs after a catastrophic earthquake. Although some jurisdictions have planned extensively in anticipation of these needs many jurisdictions have not. Cal OES should take the lead on a regional level to ensure that people with functional and access needs are taken into account at all levels of catastrophic response and recovery planning.

## **GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

---

### **Recovery Planning**

The Golden Guardian 2013 Exercise Series identified the need for additional recovery planning at all levels. Debris removal will impact jurisdictions during response and recovery. Many jurisdictions have conducted little planning for debris removal after a catastrophic earthquake. The sheer volume of debris will require coordination of efforts at all levels of local, state and federal government. Cal OES should work with Operational Areas and local jurisdictions to ensure they have robust debris removal plans.

### ***Conclusion***

The Governor's Golden Guardian 2013 Exercise Series provided the opportunity to evaluate and validate the 2008 San Francisco Bay Area Earthquake Readiness Response: Concept of Operations Plan. Bringing together local, state and federal agencies and private sector partners was extremely successful. Golden Guardian is a valuable tool for California to test its prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery capabilities for catastrophic, natural or manmade incidents. As a result of this exercise series, local, regional, state, and federal agencies are better prepared to respond to and recover from a catastrophic earthquake in California.

**GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES**  
**EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

---

## **CAL OES EXERCISE PROGRAM**

Cal OES administers its Exercise Program through the California Specialized Training Institute (CSTI). CSTI's exercise team consists of professionals from a wide variety of experiences and backgrounds including: military, law enforcement, fire response, volunteer organizations, and academia.

The purpose of CSTI's Exercise Program is to develop, coordinate, and lead a statewide exercise and evaluation program that is all-hazards based yet focuses on California specific hazards and catastrophic incidents. The overarching goals for the program are to:

- Conduct the Governor's Annual Statewide Exercise Series;
- Continue implementation of Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) methodology in California;
- Support regional exercise initiatives;
- Provide exercise support to California state agencies;
- Remain flexible and adaptable in order to conduct functional initiative exercises to meet the emerging needs of California;
- Conduct the annual State Training and Exercise Planning Workshop and produce the Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan; and
- Provide oversight for the HSEEP toolkit for California which includes the National Exercise Schedule (NEXS) and the Design and Development System (DDS).

### ***California Statewide Exercise Series***

The California Statewide Exercise Series was implemented 2004 and has become an annual exercise series conducted to coordinate prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery missions of city, county, and state governmental entities, private sector partners, and volunteer organizations. The goal of the Statewide Exercise Series is to build upon the lessons learned from exercises as well as real world events. California Statewide Exercise is currently the largest statewide exercise program of its kind in the country.

Each year's Statewide Exercise Series theme is developed with stakeholder input and is designed to assess regional or catastrophic emergency plans for the threats and hazards that California faces. The themes for future Statewide Exercises are as follows:

- 2014: Cascadia Earthquake and Tsunami
- 2015: Southern California Earthquake
- 2016: Catastrophic Flood

### ***Exercise Support Program***

The California Specialized Training Institute's exercise program provides exercise support that focuses on multi-agency/multi-jurisdictional cooperation at the county and regional levels. Exercise support program materials are designed to be quickly tailored to meet specific requests.

## GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES EXECUTIVE BRIEF

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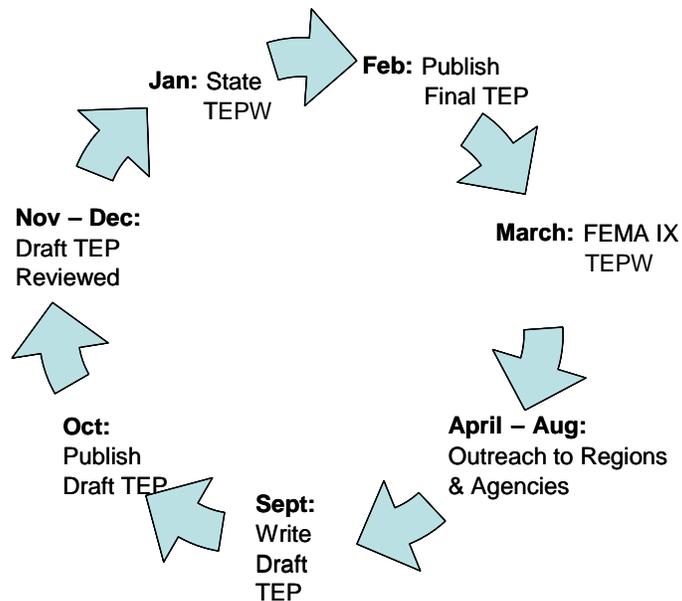
### *The California HSEEP Training Course*

The California Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) Course for Responders is a 32-hour (four-day) intermediate-level training course that incorporates the HSEEP Toolkit while using HSEEP methodology. Throughout the course, participants learn about topics including exercise conduct, program management, design and development, evaluation, and improvement planning. The course walks participants through the toolkit with an emphasis placed on creating a tabletop exercise (TTX).

### *The California Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan*

The California Specialized Training Institute's exercise team, in collaboration with local, regional, and state partners, as well as tribal nations and private industry partners, develops and revises a multi-year training and exercise plan/program for the state. Each year, CSTI conducts a Training and Exercise Planning Workshop (TEPW) where exercise planners and stakeholders work together to coordinate their training and exercise plans in a three to five year rolling cycle.

#### California's Training and Exercise Annual Planning Cycle



The goal of the TEPW is to align, de-conflict, and synchronize training and exercise opportunities where possible. A three-to-five-year training and exercise plan enhances communication and coordination among all exercise planners. It also ensures the most efficient and cost effective use of personnel and resources.

The TEPW process produces the State's Multi-Year Training and Exercise Plan which includes federal level exercises that affect California, the annual Statewide Exercise Series, other state agency and department exercises, functional area initiative exercises, and local and regional

## **GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES**

### **EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

---

exercises. The plan also coordinates important training course offerings to meet the training needs of TEPW participants.

#### ***State and Federal Strategies and Presidential Directives***

CSTI utilizes guidance from the following state and federal strategies and directives in developing its exercise program:

#### ***The Standardized Emergency Management System***

The Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) standardizes response to emergencies involving multiple jurisdictions or multiple agencies. SEMS is intended to be flexible and adaptable to the needs of all emergency responders in California. SEMS requires emergency response agencies to use basic principles and components of emergency management including ICS, multi-agency or inter-agency coordination, the operational area concept, and established mutual aid systems.

#### ***Cal OES's Strategic Plan***

Cal OES's Strategic Plan outlines the vision, mission, values, goals, and objectives critical to protecting lives and property in the Golden State. Maintaining a safe and resilient California relies on strong, cohesive leadership and meaningful partnerships. Protecting lives and property in the most populous, diverse state in the nation is not an easy task, but it is achievable by enlisting, entrusting, empowering, and encouraging state and local partners. A key objective of Cal OES's mission is to conduct training and exercises across all mission areas, while enhancing professional training for emergency management and homeland security disciplines.

#### **Cal OES's Strategic Goals**

- Effectively respond to and quickly recover from both intentional and natural disasters.
- Strengthen and unify Cal OES's operations and management to increase operational efficiency and effectiveness.
- Enhance prevention and detection capabilities to protect our State and critical infrastructure from all hazards.
- Strengthen California's ability to plan, prepare for, and mitigate disasters, emergencies, and terrorist events.
- Streamline the delivery and investment of homeland security and emergency management funding.

#### ***National Security Strategy, May 2010***

The National Security Strategy articulates the federal approach to homeland security and provides guidance on how the nation will strive to achieve the goals outlined in the Strategy. Exercises are an important component of the National Strategy:

“We are building our capability to prepare for disasters to reduce or eliminate long-term effects to people and their property from hazards and to respond to and recover from

## **GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES**

### **EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

---

major incidents. To improve our preparedness, we are integrating domestic all hazards planning at all levels of government and building key capabilities to respond to emergencies. We continue to collaborate with communities to ensure preparedness efforts are integrated at all levels of government with the private and nonprofit sectors. We are investing in operational capabilities and equipment, and improving the reliability and interoperability of communications systems for first responders. We are encouraging domestic regional planning and integrated preparedness programs and will encourage government at all levels to engage in long-term recovery planning. It is critical that we continually test and improve plans using exercises that are realistic in scenario and consequences.” *Reference Page 19.*

### ***Homeland Security Presidential Directives***

The President uses Presidential Directives to provide guidance on priorities for many issues, including homeland security. Two Presidential Directives are highlighted here, as they provide guidance to states on the importance of preparedness and exercises.

Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5: On December 17, 2003, the President issued HSPD-5, "Management of Domestic Incidents." This Directive identifies steps for improved coordination in response to incidents. It requires the United States Department of Homeland Security (USDHS) to coordinate with other federal departments and agencies and state, local and tribal governments to establish a National Response Framework (NRF), and a National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Presidential Policy Directive 8: On March 30, 2011, the President issued “PPD-8: National Preparedness.” This PPD-8 establishes a new approach to national preparedness focusing on the country’s security and resilience. The directive is aimed:

“...at strengthening the security and resilience of the United States through systematic preparation for the threats that pose the greatest risk to the security of the Nation, including acts of terrorism, cyber attacks, pandemics, and catastrophic natural disasters.”

PPD-8 directs a national system that includes guidance for planning, organization, equipment, training, and exercises to build and maintain domestic capabilities. It also directs all executive departments and agencies, with roles in the national planning frameworks, to develop department-level operational plans to support the interagency operational plans. Each national planning framework will include guidance to support corresponding planning for state, local, tribal, and territorial governments. Finally, it directs a national preparedness system that provides guidance for a national training and exercise program that facilitates the nation’s ability to build and sustain the capabilities defined by the national preparedness goal and evaluate progress toward meeting that goal.

### ***National Preparedness Goal, September 2011***

The September 2011 National Preparedness Goal builds on previous achievements and presents a unified, nationwide vision of preparedness, identifies the necessary conditions for its realization

## **GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES**

### **EXECUTIVE BRIEF**

---

and couples this vision with a system for its employment, maintenance, and sustainment. The National Preparedness Goal is:

“A secure and resilient Nation with the capabilities required across the whole community to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from the threats and hazards that pose the greatest risk.”

#### ***National Incident Management System (NIMS)***

National Incident Management System provides a consistent framework for incident management at all jurisdictional levels regardless of the cause, size, or complexity of the incident. Building upon the Incident Command System (ICS), NIMS provides the nation’s first responders and authorities with the same foundation for incident management for terrorist attacks, natural disasters and other emergencies. Exercises are vital to ensuring that NIMS is effective.

#### ***National Response Framework (NRF)***

The National Response Framework was published in January of 2008 and is a guide to how the Nation conducts all-hazards response. It is built upon *scalable, flexible, and adaptable coordinating structures* to align key roles and responsibilities *across the nation*. It describes specific authorities and best practices for managing incidents that range from the serious but purely local, to large-scale terrorist attacks or catastrophic natural disasters.

#### ***Homeland Security Grant Funds***

Federal Homeland Security Grants provide the funding for many of California’s exercise initiatives. Exercises utilizing these funds are posted on the National Exercise Schedule (NEXS) and produce After Action Reports (AARs) and Improvement Plans (IPs). AARs and IPs are formatted according to HSEEP guidelines and a password-protected copy is emailed to [hseep@dhs.gov](mailto:hseep@dhs.gov).

#### ***A Background to Exercise***

Exercises allow personnel charged with public safety, from first responders to senior officials, as well as tribal and private sector partners, to train and practice prevention, protection, response, and recovery capabilities in a risk-free environment. Exercises are also a valuable tool for assessing and improving performance, while demonstrating community resolve to prepare for major incidents. Through exercises, CSTI aims to help entities validate training and equipment obtained based on their organizational mission. This helps ensure that gaps, deficiencies, and vulnerabilities are resolved prior to a real incident, all while identifying best practices and strengths.

Well designed and executed exercises are the most effective means of:

- Assessing and validating policies, plans, procedures, training, equipment, and inter-agency agreements;
- Validating training personnel on their roles and responsibilities;

## GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES EXECUTIVE BRIEF

---

- Improving inter-agency coordination and communications;
- Identifying best practices;
- Identifying gaps in capabilities;
- Improving individual performance; and
- Identifying opportunities for improvement.

### **The Homeland Security Exercise & Evaluation Program (HSEEP)**

CSTI uses the U.S. Department of Homeland Security’s HSEEP doctrine in conducting its exercise programs. The purpose of HSEEP is to:

“...provide common exercise policy and program guidance that constitutes a national standard for exercises. HSEEP includes consistent terminology that can be used by all exercise planners, regardless of the nature and composition of their sponsoring agency or organization. In the spirit of NIMS, all efforts should be made to ensure consistent use of the terminology and processes described in HSEEP.”

### **Exercise Planning and Execution – A Progressive Approach**

The HSEEP exercise design model is the crawl, walk, run or “progressive” approach to exercise planning and execution. The building block approach ensures successful progression in exercise design, complexity, and execution, and allows for exercise objectives, scope, and scale to be tailored to the specific community while maintaining a consistent delivery method.

California’s response entities possess different levels of preparedness regarding catastrophic events. Therefore, Cal OES uses the baseline exercise progression which is to move from a seminar, to a tabletop exercise, to a functional exercise, and finally, to a full-scale exercise. This allows for a logical progression of regional and jurisdictional preparedness by increasing in size, complexity, and stress factor, while allowing for significant learning opportunities that complement, build upon, and directly lead into one another effectively.



Exercise planning should not exist in a vacuum and should be integrated into an overall community preparedness program. The following cycle is conducted annually:

- Conduct Assessment/Re-assessment;
- Identify Vulnerabilities/Targets (Critical Infrastructure);
- Align Missions with National Preparedness Goals;
- Identify Current Core Capabilities;
- Integrate Plans, Policies, Procedures, and Protocols;
- Conduct Training;
- Conduct Exercises;

## GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES EXECUTIVE BRIEF

---

- Evaluate Exercises/Training; and
- Track Improvement Plans.

### **The Exercise Planning Team**

An exercise planning team is responsible for the successful execution of all aspects of an exercise, including exercise planning, conduct, and evaluation. The planning team determines exercise objectives, tailors the scenario to jurisdictional or agency needs and develops documents used in exercise simulation, control, and evaluation. The exercise planning team also incorporates representatives from each major participating jurisdiction and agency, while keeping the planning team to a manageable size. The team is managed by an exercise planning team leader and is most effectively structured using the principles of the Incident Command System (ICS), as stated in SEMS and NIMS as referenced in the figure below.



The team's project management principles reflect SEMS/NIMS, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities and a manageable span of control. Planning team members also help develop and distribute pre-exercise materials and conduct exercise briefings and training sessions.

**Planning Meetings:** There are six basic exercise planning conferences utilized in HSEEP doctrine. Some can be combined or deleted in planning for less complex exercises. The six basic conferences are:

- Concept & Objectives Meeting (C&O): The C&O Meeting is the formal beginning of the exercise planning process. It is held to agree upon the already-identified type, scope, capabilities, objectives, and purpose of the exercise. For less complex exercises and for jurisdictions/organizations with limited resources, the C&O Meeting can be conducted in conjunction with the Initial Planning Conference (IPC).
- Initial Planning Meeting (IPM): Lays the foundation for exercise development and is typically the first step in the planning process. Its purpose is to gather input from the exercise planning team on the scope, design, requirements, conditions, objectives, level of participation, and scenario variables.

## GOLDEN GUARDIAN 2013 EXERCISE SERIES

### EXECUTIVE BRIEF

---

- Mid-Term Planning Meeting (MPM): A working session for discussion of exercise organization and staffing concepts, scenario timeline development, scheduling, logistics, and administrative requirements.
- Master Scenario Events List Meeting (MSEL): Develops the Master Scenario Events List; a chronological list supplementing the exercise scenario with event synopses, expected responses, capabilities to be demonstrated and responsible personnel.
- Final Planning Meeting (FPM): The final forum for reviewing exercise processes and procedures.
- After Action Review Meeting: The forum for analyzing the outcome of the exercise to identify strengths and challenges and for developing corrective action plans.

#### **Exercise Types**

There are seven types of exercises utilized under HSEEP methodology. They are divided up into two broad categories, discussion-based and operations-based.

##### *Discussion Based Exercises:*

- Seminar: Generally orient participants to authorities, strategies, plans, policies, procedures, resources, concepts, and ideas. Used by jurisdictions developing or making major changes to existing plans or procedures.
- Workshop: Focus is on achieving or building a product; such as plans or policies.
- Tabletop Exercise (TTX): Involves discussion between key staff, decision makers, and elected and appointed officials and is used in the application of group problem solving methods and to prepare for a more complex exercise.
- Game: A simulation of operations that often involves two or more teams and uses rules, data, and procedures to depict an actual or assumed real-life situation.

##### *Operations Based Exercises:*

- Drill: A coordinated, supervised activity usually employed to validate a single, specific operation or function in a single agency or organization entity.
- Functional Exercise (FE): Test and evaluate individual capabilities, multiple functions or activities within a function. The focus is on exercise plans, policies, procedures, and staff that direct and control functions within the Incident Command and Unified Command Systems. These are also known as Command Post Exercises.
- Full-Scale Exercise (FSE): Response elements are required to mobilize and deploy to a designated site or location in response to a simulated attack, generally for an extended period. Actual mobilization and movement of personnel and resources are required to demonstrate coordination and response capability. EOCs and field command posts are activated. The FSE is the largest, costliest, and most complex exercise type and may involve participation at the state, local, regional, and federal levels. Although pre-scripted events may be used, the exercise is primarily driven by player actions and decisions.