
Unit 4: Reassessing Your Readiness Post-Incident

Objectives

At the end of this unit, the students should be able to:

- Describe methods to assess and analyze Multiagency Coordination System operations.
 - Identify solutions that target and mitigate deficiencies.
 - Describe the process for replenishing resources.
 - Describe strategies for maintaining the functionality of the Multiagency Coordination System.
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Scope

- Introduction and Unit Overview
 - Unit Objectives
 - How To Assess Your Operations
 - What Happened?
 - Activity 4.1: What Happened?
 - Capturing Lessons Learned
 - Activity 4.2: Capturing Lessons Learned
 - Targeting Efforts for Improvement
 - Step 1: Identify the Problem
 - Step 2: Find the Right Solution
 - Step 3: Test the Solution
 - Testing the System
 - Tests
 - Training
 - Exercises
 - Feeding Exercise Outcomes Into the Planning Process
 - Maintaining MAC System Readiness
 - Summary and Transition
-

Methodology

The instructors will begin this unit by providing the unit objectives and explaining that the unit will focus on how to learn from past operations to improve future operations. They will transition to the next topic by engaging the students in a discussion designed to help them develop a list of ways to assess their Multiagency Coordination System operations. The instructors will encourage the students to look at documentation from other jurisdictions' operations as a means of comparison and improving operations. The students will complete an activity in which they work in groups to analyze a case study and develop areas in need of improvement. At the end of this activity, the instructors will facilitate a class discussion about lessons learned from the case study. Following the discussion, the instructors will describe the actual lessons learned, comparing the groups' responses against the actual.

Methodology (Continued)

During the next topic, the instructors will present a three-step model for targeting efforts for improvement. Using the case study from the activity, they will explore alternative solutions to the issues identified and select one or more potential solutions. At the end of this discussion, the instructors will emphasize the need to update their plans, policies, procedures, and agreement and to test, train, and exercise as a way of validating this solution.

Next, the instructors will describe briefly the need to replenish supplies and equipment to ensure future readiness. Finally, the instructors will engage the group in a discussion of the steps they should take to maintain system readiness, including updating rosters, media lists, and other information and conducting tests, training, and exercises. Following the discussion, the instructors will refer the students to a job aid that will help them identify items to be addressed to maintain system readiness.

At the end of this unit, the instructors will answer any questions that the students have, summarize the key points of the unit, and transition to the tabletop exercise.

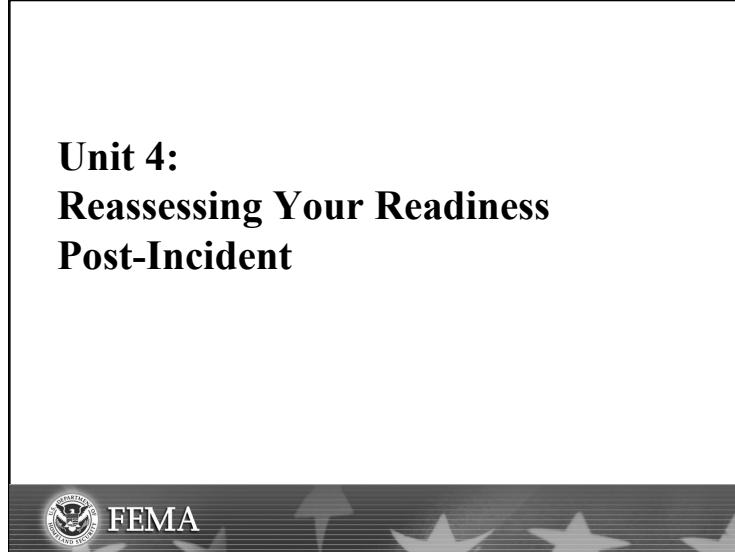
Time Plan

A suggested time plan for this unit is shown below. More or less time may be required, based on the experience level of the group.

Topic	Time
Introduction and Unit Overview	5 minutes
How To Assess Your Operations	15 minutes
What Happened?	10 minutes
Activity 4.1: What Happened?	35 minutes
Capturing Lessons Learned	10 minutes
Activity 4.2: Capturing Lessons Learned	50 minutes
Targeting Efforts for Improvement	10 minutes
Testing the System	15 minutes
Maintaining MAC System Readiness	10 minutes
Summary and Transition	5 minutes
Total Time	2 hours 45 minutes



Visual 4.1



Visual Description: Unit 4: Reassessing Your Readiness Post-Incident

Instructor Notes

Introduce this unit by telling the students that Unit 4 will cover post-incident information gathering and analysis, including:

- A method for assessing operations.
- How to capture lessons learned.
- A model for targeting improvement efforts.
- Strategies for maintaining Multiagency Coordination System readiness.



Visual 4.2

Unit 4 Objectives

- Describe methods to assess and analyze their Multiagency Coordination System operations.
- Identify solutions that target and mitigate deficiencies.
- Describe the process for replenishing resources.
- Describe strategies for maintaining the functionality of the Multiagency Coordination System.



Unit 4:
Reassessing Your Readiness Post-Incident

Visual Description: Unit 4 Objectives

Instructor Notes

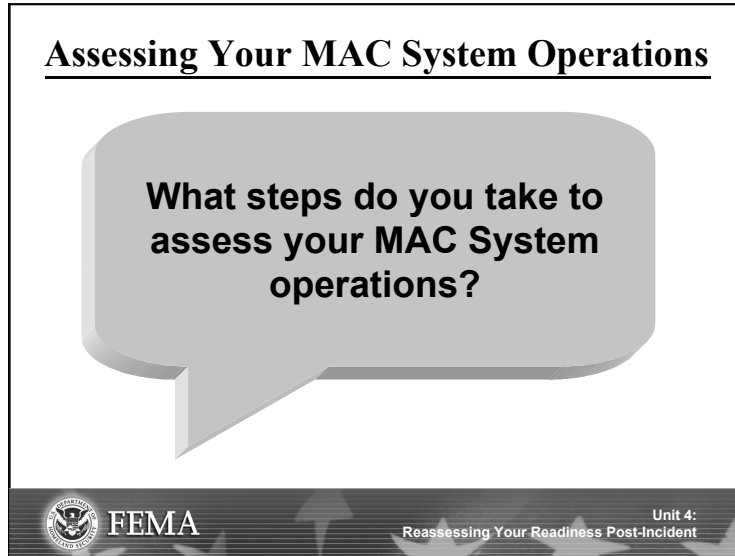
Refer the students to page 4-2 to review the unit objectives.

Tell the group that at the end of this unit, they should be able to:

- Describe methods to assess and analyze their Multiagency Coordination System operations.
- Identify solutions that target and mitigate deficiencies.
- Describe the process for replenishing resources.
- Describe strategies for maintaining the functionality of the Multiagency Coordination System.



Visual 4.3



Visual Description: What steps do you take to assess your Multiagency Coordination System operations?

Instructor Notes

Introduce this topic by asking the following question:

What steps do you take to assess your Multiagency Coordination System operations?

Allow the group time to respond. Possible responses could include:

- Meeting with key personnel from participating agencies to discuss the operation.
- Meet with citizens and groups impacted by the operation.
- Reviewing documentation from the operation to determine what could be done better.
- Preparing an after-action report for dissemination.

Note that the students could present a range of assessment methods beyond those listed above, or an approach that uses a combination of methods.



Visual 4.4

Assessing Your MAC System Operations

- Review documentation.
- Meet with all key personnel.
- Discuss:
 - What worked well.
 - What didn't.
- Develop an action plan for improving areas requiring improvement.
- Follow through on the action plan!



Unit 4:
Reassessing Your Readiness Post-Incident

Visual Description: Assessing your Multiagency Coordination System Operations

Instructor Notes

Summarize the discussion by providing several key steps that every jurisdiction should take:

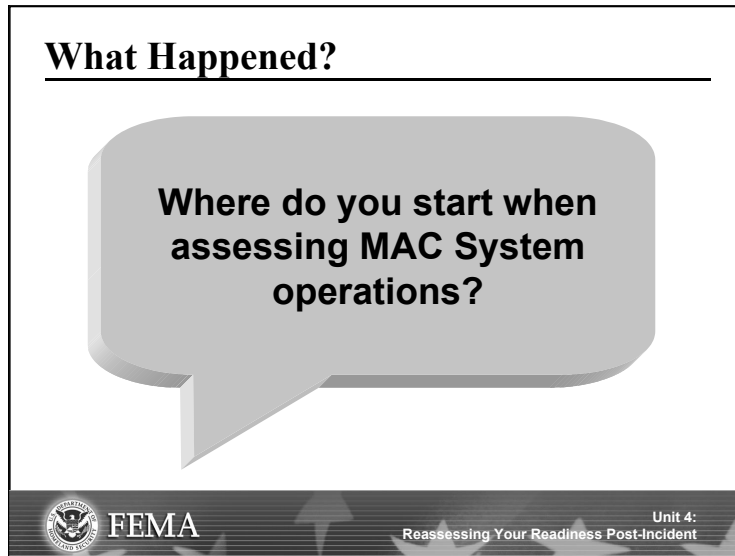
- Review documentation from the incident. Important decisions that were made during the incident, issues that arose and how they were resolved, and other critical information should have been documented at the time. Reviewing the documentation can provide a starting point for developing a summary of operations and an agenda for a meeting with key players.
- Convene a post-incident meeting with all key personnel, including the Incident Commander, Command and General Staff, mutual aid partners and other cooperating and assisting agency personnel, and all senior personnel who represented their agencies at the EOC or other MAC Entities during the incident.
- Be open and honest in gathering information about what worked well and what didn't. Try to determine whether problems that occurred resulted from inadequate guidance or procedures, miscommunication, poor decision-making, or other causes.

Caution the group to establish a nonthreatening environment for the discussion. The purpose of the meeting is to gather and analyze information, not to assess blame.

- Develop an action plan for improving areas in need of improvement.
- Follow through on the action plan!



Visual 4.5



Visual Description: Where do you start when assessing Multiagency Coordination System operations?

Instructor Notes

Ask the question:

Where do you start assessing an incident?

Allow the students time to respond. Then, display the next visual.



Visual 4.6

Post-Incident Meeting

- Invite all key personnel:
 - Incident Commander
 - Mutual aid partners
 - Public/private partners
 - EOC personnel
 - Public officials
 - Affected members of the public
- Invite open and honest discussion about:
 - What worked.
 - What didn't.



Visual Description: Post-Incident Meeting

Instructor Notes

Transition to the post-incident meeting. The purpose of the post-incident meeting is to capture an accurate picture of what happened on the incident in order to improve future operations. Emphasize the need to include all key players at the meeting, including:

- The Incident Commander (or Incident Commanders if there are multiple incidents, or a Unified Command).
- Mutual aid partners who supported the incident.
- Public/private partners (e.g., the American Red Cross or representatives from business and industry who supported the incident).
- EOC personnel, including the Emergency Manager, Section Chiefs, and others who played a key role in coordinating the response.
- Public officials (generally, those who were present at the EOC during the incident) from affected jurisdictions.
- Members of the public who were affected by or received assistance from the incident organization, as appropriate.

Urge the group to invite open and honest discussion about what worked well and what didn't. Remind the group that **the purpose of the meeting is to improve future operations, not to assess blame.**

Tell the class to solicit specific issues and, when identifying areas for improvement, try to determine the specific cause of the problem (e.g., insufficient policy, inadequate training, etc.). Emphasize the need to solicit concise suggestions for improving future operations.



Visual 4.7

Develop Incident Summary

Develop a summary of:

- The incident.
- Response operations.
- Resources deployed.
- Key events/timeframes.
- Decisions made.
- Issues.



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Visual Description: Develop Incident Summary

Instructor Notes

Summarize the students' responses by telling the group that the first step in analyzing a Multiagency Coordination System operation is to capture adequately what happened. Caution that it is not as easy as it may seem to capture meaningful information in a way that is easily understandable and usable—especially if the incident was widespread or very complex.

Suggest that the students develop an executive summary of the incident, including:

- A description of the incident.
- Initial and long-term response operations.
- The resources that were deployed, including whether specific resources were requested through mutual aid, EMAC, or another mechanism.
- A description of key events (e.g., cascading events, etc.) and the timeframes of occurrence.
- Decisions that were made in response to events and, where possible, the results of those decisions.
- Issues that arose during the course of operations. Include issues that arose between or among Multiagency Coordination System entities, between the incident command and the EOC, and at the EOC (or other MAC Entities).

Direct the students' attention to the post-incident report that begins on page 4-9 of the Student Manual. Allow the group time to review the report. Then, display the next visual.



Visual 4.8

Activity 4.1: What Happened?

1. Review the Post-Incident Report as a group.
2. Answer questions.
3. Be prepared to discuss your responses with the class.



You will have 10 minutes to complete this activity.



Unit 4:
Reassessing Your Readiness Post-Incident

Visual Description: Activity 4.1: What Happened?

Instructor Notes

Follow the steps below to conduct this activity:

1. Tell the students to work in their table groups to complete this activity.
2. Direct the students to the activity that begins on page 4-9 of the Student Manual.
3. Ask the groups to read the Post-Incident Report and answer the questions.
4. Tell the students they will have 10 minutes for this activity.



Activity 4.1: What Happened?

Student Manual
Page 4-9**Post-Incident Report**

On September 16, 2004, Florida's county health departments¹ were contacted by the Florida Department of Health requesting hurricane relief volunteers. The request included the need for nurses, management personnel, and clerical volunteers. Upon approval from the Health Commissioner, 2 teams of 16 volunteers each were formed. The county health department administrators, district nurse managers, and central office personnel were contacted. Possible volunteers were informed that they would be deploying at any time and for at least 7 days. Each team consisted of 10 nurses and 6 clerical volunteers. Each team was assigned a team leader and an assistant team leader.

As the teams were being formed, the Florida Department of Health forwarded forms via email to the county health departments. Volunteers were required to complete the forms and submit them to the Administration Section Chief. At that time, an Incident Command System (ICS) was initiated. An Incident Commander was named. Section Chief appointments were also made for all ICS Sections.

The Florida Department of Health Situation Room was used as the foundation for meetings, correspondence, and all communication. The Incident Commander and the Administration Section Chief were given access to the Situation Room email. Volunteers were told to be on standby and to watch their email for anything from the Situation Room for deployment information. Personnel in the Situation Room worked through the State EOC for transportation to Florida. Volunteers were provided instructions via email as to what supplies they should bring.

On the morning of September 21, volunteers were informed that they would be deploying via Air National Guard transport on September 22. A briefing was set up at 1:30 p.m. on September 21 in the Situation Room for volunteers who could be at the central office. Volunteers were to meet on September 22, at 5:45 a.m. on the top level of the Florida Department of Health parking garage where transportation to their flight would be provided. On the afternoon of September 21, after the briefing, plans changed and commercial flight arrangements had to be made. The Logistics Section Chief worked with the Florida Department of Health procurement department to secure travel. All volunteers were contacted by telephone about a new meeting time for departure.

On Wednesday, September 22, volunteers met at 4:30 a.m. on the top level of the Florida Department of Health parking garage. Volunteers had a briefing in the Situation Room before being shuttled to the airport. During the briefing, they were informed that all communication would be made through their team leaders. Team leaders informed the Situation Room at each layover and when the teams arrived in Florida.

¹ In Florida, employees of county health departments are in reality employees of the State of Florida.



Activity 4.1: What Happened? (Continued)

Student Manual
Page 4-10**Post-Incident Report (Continued)**

Upon arrival, the EOC staff met the teams and provided directions and six vans to deploy to Tallahassee for the evening. At that time, the teams were informed that they would be caravanning with a team from another State the next day. The teams were to report to Crest View for their assignments on September 23. The teams were dispatched to the Midway area and the Milton County Health Department. They were to drive to Alabama to stay for the evening and report to the areas needed on the morning of Thursday, September 24. The teams requested hand-held radios and gloves. The teams reported on September 24, and began to work. Volunteers tracked cases of pertussis, conducted community assessments, distributed water and food to hurricane victims, provided immunizations, and completed other duties as needed. Volunteers working in the community were warned about the possibility alligators, mosquitoes, and debris. During the afternoon of September 24, a request was made for the volunteers to prepare for the next hurricane, which was expected to strike the east coast. They were moved to Lake City, Florida. After arrival, the teams had to wait until the hurricane passed before their next move. The teams were based in the middle of the hurricane, but their safety was constantly monitored. A safe room was provided at the hotel they where they were staying.

On Sunday, September 26, the teams were told to deploy to Marion and Sumter Counties to work at shelters on September 27. The volunteers were split by occupation and according to need. Some of the work involved helping the elderly; comforting victims; providing immunizations, food, and water; and performing community assessments. The shelters were open 24 hours, and volunteers worked all shifts.

On Tuesday, September 29, the volunteers were on the road again to Tallahassee to prepare for departure the next day. On Wednesday, September 30, the volunteers reported to the airport to return home. The teams returned to the Florida Department of Health at 6:00 p.m. During the ride back from the airport, a “hot wash” (participant debriefing) was performed with the team leaders and the Incident Commander. Each volunteer was requested to submit an After-Action Report to the Administration Section upon return.

Instructor Notes

Ask the group:

What do you think of this summary?

Allow the group time to respond. If not mentioned by the group, point out that the summary is very high level and, while it is fairly detailed, it may not include enough information to evaluate the operation.

Then ask:

What other information do you think should be included?

Allow the group time to respond. If not mentioned by the group, suggest that more operational details should be included. Specifically, aspects of actual operations, decisions made, and issues that arose would be helpful in evaluating the operation.

Refer the students to the additional information that begins on page 4-11 of the Student Manual. Allow the group time to review the information before proceeding.



Activity 4.1: What Happened? (Continued)

Student Manual
Page 4-11**Post-Incident Report Details**

The input below was provided by disaster volunteers and key personnel at the Florida Department of Health.

A. Incident Command System

Volunteers, as well as other Florida Department of Health personnel, gained a better understanding of how the Incident Command System really works. There is still a need for employees to understand that, when ICS is initiated, standard operating procedures no longer apply. Florida Department of Health facilities should have a better understanding of how ICS is utilized. During the deployment, several requests were denied, causing a delay in the teams' requests. When the Deputy Commissioner was approached with the same request, it was approved, however. Building Management, Internal Services and Procurement Section failed to respond to several requests for deployment purposes, which created a delay in getting a response from the Incident Commander and the volunteer teams.

B. Communications Interoperability

Communications was established and maintained at all times with the deployed volunteer teams. Satellite phones were evaluated and worked as expected. Because there was such a diversity of cellular service providers, the teams had the capability to communicate with the Situation Room at all times, with the exception of when Hurricane Charley made landfall. Again, the satellite phones were evaluated and worked well. Two-way, hand-held radios were shipped for overnight delivery so the teams could communicate. Although the teams criticized the radios as being ineffective, evaluations conducted at the Florida Department of Health indicated that the radios were effective.

C. Establishment of Common Responsibilities

Volunteers learned to be flexible and work as a team. The lack of a preapproved checklist led to the failure of several individuals to bring adequate funding and proper identification. The team leaders communicated these concerns to the Situation Room, and remedies were identified and implemented.

D. Allotted Briefings by Command and General Staff

Briefings were conducted by the Incident Commander on a daily basis at 9:00 a.m. There were several occasions when there were two briefings per day. Minutes were taken at the briefings, and all issues were resolved through the ICS structure.

E. Availability of Equipment

The teams were deployed with satellite phones and digital cameras. During the mission, the teams requested hand-held radios and gloves. These items were shipped for overnight delivery to the teams.



Activity 4.1: What Happened? (Continued)

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Page 4-12

Post-Incident Report Details (Continued)

F. Interoperability of Agencies

The Situation Room was in contact with the Florida EOC and the Florida Health Department. Daily situation reports were forwarded to the Situation Room, and a briefing was conducted of all Command and General Staff components.

G. Situation Room

The Situation Room was operational 24 hours per day, 7 days per week during the deployment. Two operational shifts were staffed, from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., with all equipment being monitored by State personnel. Individual after-action reports indicated that many of the activated staff were “satisfied” with their ability to reach someone at the Situation Room at all times.

Instructor Notes

Ask the group:

What does this information add to the report?

Allow the group time to respond. If not mentioned by the group, point out that the additional information provides details about key elements of the operation, including the flow of information among the various MAC System levels (the field level, the Situation Room (DEOC), and the State EOC). This report also describes key events. This information adds considerably to the depth of the report and will help decision-makers improve operations. Point out that consideration should be given to how the report is formatted. Many managers want quick access to key points, and would expect some sort of executive summary, while others may prefer a detailed narrative format.



Visual 4.9

What Did You Learn?

Lessons Learned:

1. Provide additional ICS training for Building Management personnel.
2. Develop/disseminate predeployment checklists.
3. Prescreen/predesignate strike teams.
4. Issue a State cell phone for each team.
5. Develop a form for tracking return of equipment/supplies.
6. Develop emergency finance plan.



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Visual Description: What Did You Learn?

Instructor Notes

Tell the group that the visual lists the actual lessons learned from the operation described in the post-incident report. Allow the students time to review the visual and compare it to the report. Then ask,

Would you add anything else?

Allow the group time to respond. Potential responses might include:

- Review procedures for establishing volunteer teams (to ensure a skill/knowledge match, ensure that volunteers are physically able to perform their mission, etc.).
- Develop an agreement with the Air National Guard to ensure that needed transportation is available within the timeframes required.
- Review and revise (as necessary) resource management policies and procedures related to issue and return of equipment. (A resource issue in one area of the operation may be indicative of the entire operation.)

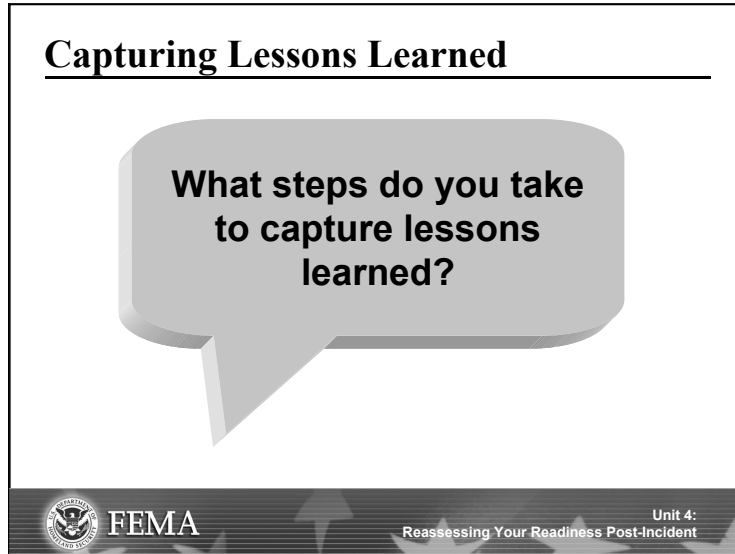
The students may provide other suggestions as well.

Remind the group that the post-incident summary they reviewed involved a very small operation conducted under an EMAC with another State. Emphasize that post-incident summaries for larger incidents will be far more complex than the one the class reviewed.

Tell the group that lessons learned and targeting efforts for improvement will be covered in more detail later in this unit.



Visual 4.10



Visual Description: What steps do you take to capture lessons learned?

Instructor Notes

Ask the group:

What steps do you take to capture lessons learned?

Allow the group time to respond. Summarize the discussion by displaying the next visual.

Remind the group that lessons learned can be positive as well as negative.



Visual 4.11

Ways To Capture Lessons Learned

- Document review
- Facilitated “hot wash”
- Public/media input



Unit 4:
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Visual Description: Ways To Capture Lessons Learned

Instructor Notes

Point out that the students have already discussed document review but that there are other ways to capture lessons learned. This visual lists two common ways:

- One or more facilitated “hot washes” (participant debriefings) can help surface concerns from personnel at various levels of the Multiagency Coordination System organization. Although it may be difficult to do, especially after large or complex incidents, hot washes should be conducted with as many persons as possible and throughout the entire Multiagency Coordination System structure (e.g., the response organization, DEOCs, the local and State EOCs, etc.).

Point out that using an impartial facilitator helps hot wash participants speak more freely and honestly.

- Public and media input is rarely wanted after an incident. Talking to the affected public and following media reports on how well or how poorly an incident was handled can provide important clues to the public’s perception of the response.

Suggest that, if public and media reports about one or more aspects of a response are particularly negative, facilitated focus groups with members of the public and media may be helpful to clarify concerns and manage future expectations.

Stress the need to prepare for hot washes and focus groups by:

- Reviewing all pertinent documentation about the incident.
- Preparing an agenda for the meeting.



Visual 4.12

Activity 4.2: Capturing Lessons Learned

1. Work in your table groups.
2. Review the scenario.
3. Develop an agenda for a hot wash or focus group, as assigned by the instructor.
4. Be prepared to discuss your agenda with the class.



You will have 15 minutes to complete this activity.



FEMA

Unit 4:
Reassessing Your Readiness Post-Incident

Visual Description: Activity 4.2: Capturing Lessons Learned

Instructor Notes

Tell the group that the purpose of this activity is to provide an opportunity to identify the critical aspects of an incident and develop a preliminary agenda for either a hot wash or a focus group.

Follow the steps below to conduct this activity:

1. Tell the students to work in their table groups to complete this activity.
2. Direct the students to the activity that begins on page 4-17 of the Student Manual.
3. Ask the groups to read the scenario and discuss it as a group to identify critical points that must be covered to capture lessons learned.
4. Direct half of the groups to develop a draft agenda for a facilitated hot wash for response personnel and half to develop a draft agenda for a focus group with members of the public.
5. Tell the class that they will have 15 minutes to complete this activity.
6. When all are finished, facilitate a class discussion about the critical points and the groups' agendas.
 - Try to gain consensus on the critical points to cover for each type of meeting. Note that the points may be different for hot wash participants than for focus group participants.
 - Ensure that the groups' agendas cover the points that they identified as critical. Solicit suggestions for creative ways to gather the information needed from each meeting. Provide input from your own experience about where "flash points" could occur during the meetings and how to troubleshoot them.

Allow 30 minutes for the discussion.



Activity 4.2: Capturing Lessons Learned

Student Manual
Page 4-17

Purpose: The purpose of this activity is to provide an opportunity for you to identify the critical aspects of an incident and develop a preliminary agenda for either a hot wash or a focus group.

Instructions: Follow the steps below to complete this activity:

1. Work in your table groups to complete this activity.
2. Read the scenario below, and discuss it as a group. Identify critical points that must be addressed to capture lessons learned.
3. Based on the task assignment given by the instructor, develop either a draft agenda for a facilitated hot wash for response personnel or a draft agenda for a focus group with members of the public.
4. You will have 15 minutes to complete this activity.
5. Select a spokesperson to present your group's critical points and agenda to the class.

Scenario:

On May 19, at about 9:00 a.m., a 55-passenger bus was traveling eastbound on an interstate highway in a rural area outside a major city. Visibility was good and the pavement was dry. The bus, carrying 43 passengers, was en route to a casino approximately 80 miles away. The bus departed the right side of the highway, crossed the shoulder, and traveled onto the grassy slope along the shoulder. It continued on the slope, struck the end of the of the guardrail, traveled through a chain-link fence, vaulted over a paved golf cart path, collided with the far side of a dirt embankment, and then bounced and slid forward to its final resting position.

At the time of the accident, a city police officer was on routine patrol traveling westbound on the highway. The officer pulled into the median and notified the dispatcher of the accident. Notification was made at 9:04 a.m.

By 9:12 a.m., fire and emergency medical service (EMS) personnel began arriving. The emergency medical technicians (EMTs) who arrived first at the incident reported that they found 10 people on the ground outside of the bus. Because there were fatalities, the Medical Examiner was called to the scene. Other victims were still on the bus, so the EMTs entered the bus by breaking side windows and removed the passengers. Firefighters immediately started to contain a fuel spill so that it did not spread into a nearby stream. Police officers established a perimeter around the accident and began rerouting traffic.

Of the 43 passengers, there were 4 fatalities, 6 with life-threatening injuries, 7 with serious injuries, and 10 with minor injuries. It soon became clear that additional response assistance would be necessary. The Incident Commander requested assistance through the 9-1-1 dispatch center, requesting additional

**Activity 4.2: Capturing Lessons Learned (Continued)****Student Manual
Page 4-18****Scenario (Continued):**

ambulance response through mutual aid. Because the county used centralized dispatch, the dispatcher made the request directly from three adjacent communities.

Ambulances arrived at the scene and began transporting victims to local hospitals. All went to the closest hospital until told that they could not handle more—without regard to the nature or severity of the victims' injuries. As a result, victims needing trauma care were transported to hospitals that did not have trauma centers. Victims with less serious injuries were taken to trauma centers.

Additionally, although the EOC activated at Level 3 (monitoring), it never really became involved in the incident. The Incident Commander established command and managed the response, but coordination among the DEOCs never happened. Actions taken at the scene were never communicated, either upward or laterally to mutual aid agencies.



Activity 4.2: Capturing Lessons Learned (Continued)

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Page 4-19

1. Use the space provided below to capture the points that you feel are most critical to be covered in the meeting assigned to your group.

Class solution:

“Hot wash” topics should include what went well (according to plans and established protocols) and what went poorly. All disciplines (law enforcement, fire, and EMS) should discuss their response, as should representatives of the 9-1-1 dispatch center, the hospitals, the Medical Examiner, and the EOC. Followup recommendations and assignments should be made.

Focus group topics should include a general review of what happened at the incident. The “public” in this case is likely to include victims and their families. They will be most interested in the medical response, and the topics may include a quick explanation of mass casualty incident (MCI) protocols and plans, and a discussion of where the response deviated from the plans. Public input should be solicited on specific questions and issues, such as how the system could better track victims and provide information to families.

2. Use the space below to develop a draft agenda for the meeting assigned to your group.

Class Solution:

“Hot Wash” Agenda

1. Introductions and ground rules
2. Review of incident
3. Review of standard protocols and plans
4. Discussion of “the good, the bad, and the ugly”
5. Recommendations
6. Followup

Focus Group Agenda

1. Introductions and ground rules
2. Review of incident
3. Discussion of specific areas requiring public input
4. Recommendations
5. Followup



Visual 4.13



Visual Description: You've captured lessons learned. What do you do now?

Instructor Notes

Ask the group:

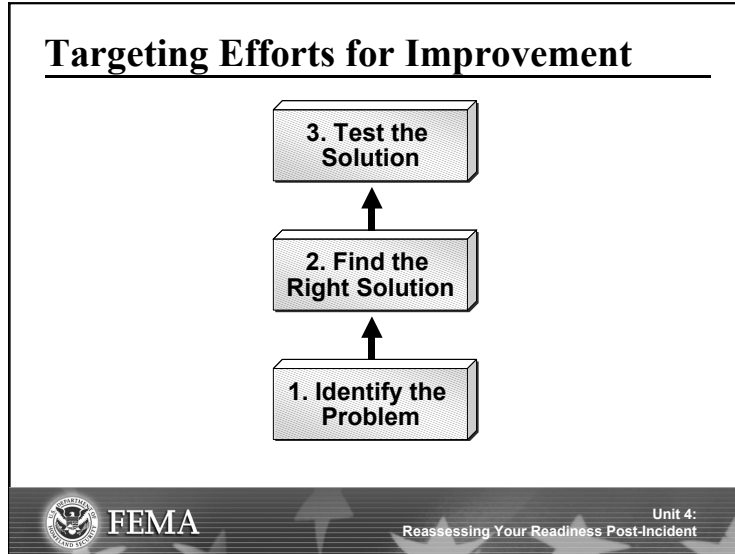
You've captured lessons learned from the response. What do you do now?

Allow the group time to respond. Note that there may be a range of responses offered.

Suggest that the best way to target efforts for improvement is to establish a structure that will lead logically to a solution.



Visual 4.14



Visual Description: Targeting Efforts for Improvement

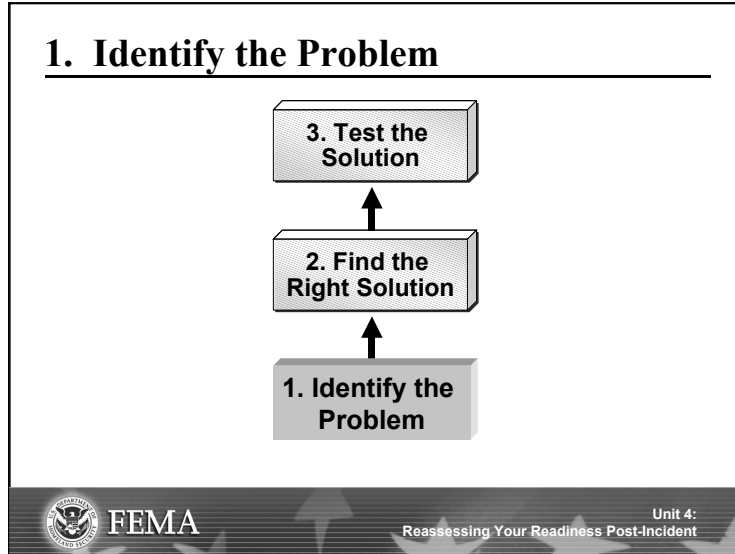
Instructor Notes

Suggest the three-step model shown in the visual is an easy method for keeping improvement efforts on track.

Tell the group that each step in the model will be covered next.



Visual 4.15



Visual Description: Step 1: Identify the Problem

Instructor Notes

Tell the group that the first step in the model is to identify the problem. Point out that problem identification is not always as easy as it seems because there is a tendency to treat the “symptom” rather than the disease.

Provide the following examples to reinforce the above point.

“The problem is that he didn’t wear his Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and he was injured.”

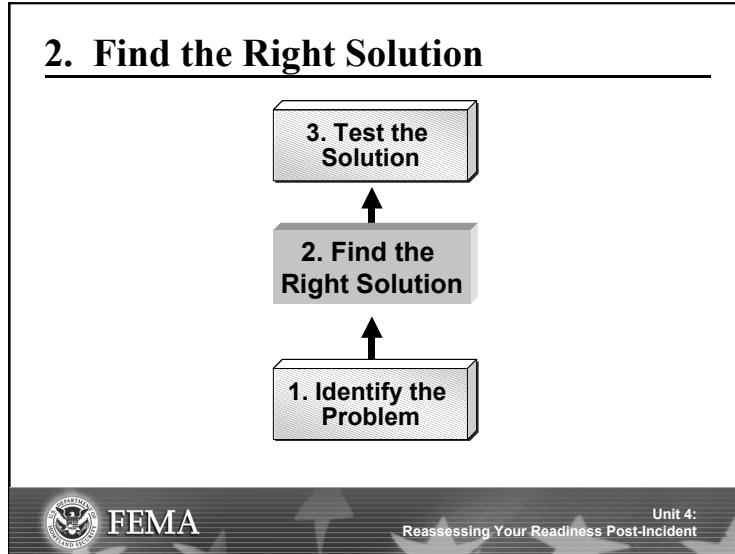
Facilitate a brief discussion about this statement. Ensure that the students understand that the problem is not as stated (failure to wear PPE). More likely, the actual problem is that protocols and SOPs requiring the use of PPE were not enforced, which is a management issue. The problem also could be that the individual did not know that PPE was required, which is a training issue. Clearly, more exploration of the problem is required.

“I didn’t understand the codes she was using. I just didn’t know what to do.”

Facilitate a brief discussion around this statement. Ensure that the students understand that the problem is not that the speaker needs to be trained to understand codes. The problem lies in using the codes in the first place. In this case, training for the individual using the codes may be required or, more likely, policy and procedures need to be clarified and/or enforced.



Visual 4.16



Visual Description: Step 2: Find the Right Solution

Instructor Notes

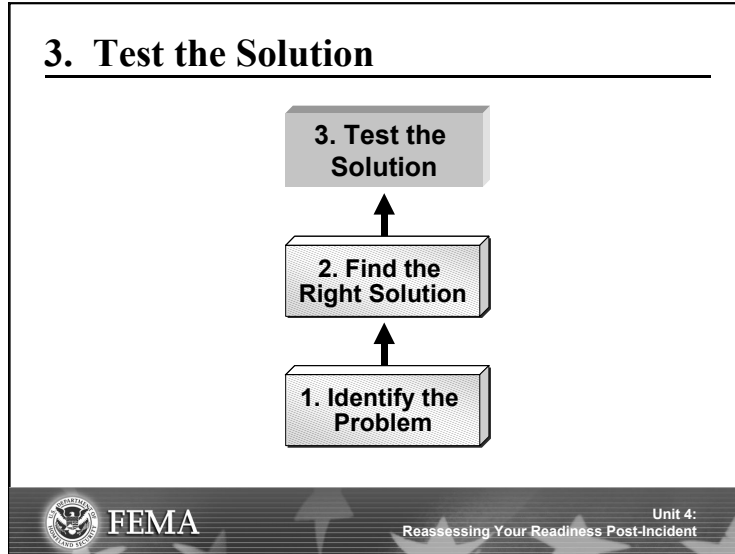
Tell the group that the next step involves finding the right solution. Ask:

What do you do to find possible solutions?

Allow the group time to respond. Summarize the responses by suggesting that the students think “outside the box.” Suggest that they explore all possible solutions before narrowing and targeting a single solution or combination of solutions. Urge the group to develop and analyze a comprehensive list of possibilities so that all options can be explored. By brainstorming all possible solutions, it may be possible to identify an innovative solution that otherwise may not be considered. It also may be that some combination of solutions will work best.



Visual 4.17



Visual Description: Step 3: Test the Solution

Instructor Notes

Tell the group that the third step is to test the solution.



Visual 4.18



Visual Description: How do you test the solution?

Instructor Notes

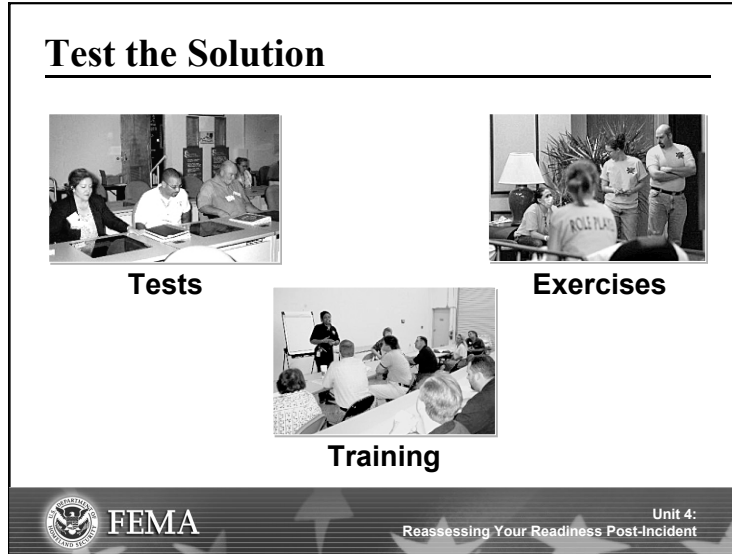
Ask the group the following question:

How do you test the solution?

Allow the group time to respond. Summarize their responses by displaying the next visuals.



Visual 4.19



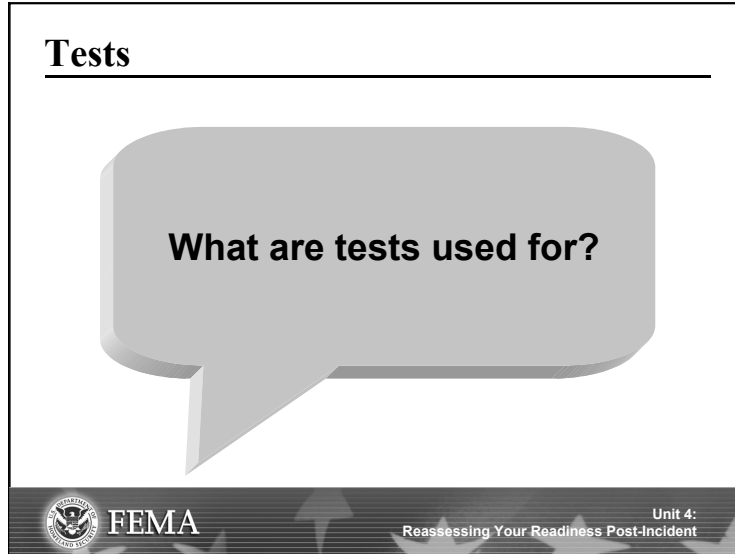
Visual Description: Test the Solution

Instructor Notes

Tell the group that the only way to test potential solutions is through tests, training, and exercises.



Visual 4.20



Visual Description: What are tests used for?

Instructor Notes

Ask the group:

What are tests used for?

Allow the group time to respond. If not mentioned by the group, explain that tests are used to verify whether systems perform to expected standards. Provide examples of systems that should be tested.

- Computer and other data systems.
- Communications systems.

Note that systems include hardware and equipment, as well as the human tasks needed to activate and operate them. Add other systems that should be tested based on your experience.

Tell the group that systems should be tested anytime a change to the system has been made to ensure that they work as intended.



Visual 4.21

Tests

Tests are used to:

- Verify whether systems perform to expected standards.



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Reassessing Your Readiness Post-Incident

Visual Description: Tests

Instructor Notes

Tests are used to:

- Verify whether systems perform to expected standards.



Visual 4.22

Training

Types of training:

- Briefings
- Hands-on training



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Unit 4:
Reassessing Your Readiness Post-Incident

Visual Description: Training

Instructor Notes

Explain that training should be conducted when:

- Post-incident analysis indicates a performance problem.
- There is a change to policy or procedure that affects job performance.

Tell the group that two types of training are commonly used to train incident personnel:

- Briefings are a good way to disseminate information about policy and/or procedure changes and as a precursor to hands-on training. Briefings typically take one-half day or less and are intended to transfer knowledge or change attitudes.
- Hands-on training is intended to provide skills that are required during an incident. Hands-on training should be progressive in that it should build on the participants' existing knowledge base and incorporate increasingly complex, job-related skills. Hands-on training is performance based. All participants completing hands-on training should be able to perform at or above established minimum levels for identified tasks.

Acknowledge that hands-on training can be supplemented by web-based or classroom training as necessary to address the performance issue.



Visual 4.23

Exercises

Types of exercises:

- Orientation seminars
- Tabletop exercises
- Drills
- Functional exercises
- Full-scale exercises



Visual Description: Exercises

Instructor Notes

Remind the group that exercises can be used to test people and systems. Facilitate a brief discussion of the types of exercises:

Exercise Types

The type of exercise that best meets a State, territorial, regional, tribal or local need is identified through analysis of the stated exercise purpose, proposed objectives, experience, operations, historical precedence, and recommended levels of participation. Each exercise type has a specific planning process, from startup through conduct and evaluation.

There are two broad categories of exercises:

- Discussion-Based Exercises
- Operations-Based Exercises



Visual 4.24

Discussion-Based Exercises

- Seminars
- Workshops
- Tabletop exercises
- Games



Unit 4:
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Visual Description: Discussion-Based Exercises

Instructor Notes

Discussion-Based Exercises

Discussion-Based Exercises are used to highlight new or existing emergency management policies, plans, or procedures. Typically these exercises focus on strategic or policy-oriented issues. Facilitators usually lead a discussion of issues related to the objectives of the exercise. Discussion-based exercises include:

- *Seminars:* A seminar is generally used to orient or provide an overview of authorities, strategies, policies, plans, procedures, protocols, resources, concepts, or ideas. A seminar is typically an informal discussion lead by a leader or facilitator. A seminar can provide a good starting point for jurisdictions that are developing or making major changes or reviewing NIMS/emergency management policies, plans, procedures, and resources.
- *Workshops:* A workshop is similar to a seminar with increased participant interaction and a focus on achieving or building a product. A workshop can also be used to achieve various exercise design steps for other exercises such as determining exercise objectives, scenario components, or exercise evaluation elements. Workshops often have a series of facilitators and employ the use of breakout sessions to accomplish goals. A workshop is ideal for obtaining consensus on how NIMS command and management principles (Incident Command System, Multiagency Coordination System, and public information system) can be integrated into community emergency operations policies, plans, and procedures.

Discussion-Based Exercises (Continued)

- *Tabletop Exercises:* A tabletop exercise can involve senior staff, elected or appointed officials, or other key emergency management staff at the coordination, operations, or discipline-specific level in an informal setting, discussing simulated situations. A tabletop exercise is intended to generate discussion of emergency management issues regarding a hypothetical situation. A tabletop exercise can be used to assess policies, plans, procedures, and resources, or to assess types of systems needed to prevent, prepare for, respond to, or recover from a defined event. During a tabletop exercise, participants typically discuss the issues raised by a series of problem statements, using appropriate policies, plans, procedures, and resources. Tabletop exercises can be aimed at facilitating an understanding of NIMS concepts, identifying strengths and shortfalls, and/or achieving changes in attitudes or perceptions.
- *Games:* A game is a simulation of operations that often involves two or more teams, usually in a competitive environment, using rules, data, and procedures designed to depict an actual or assumed real-life situation. Participants are commonly presented with scenarios and asked to perform a task associated with a portion of the scenario. In a game, the same situation can oftentimes be examined from various perspectives by changing the variables and parameters that guide participant action. Computer-generated scenarios and simulations can often provide a realistic and time-sensitive method of introducing situations for analysis and decision-making.



Visual 4.25

Operations-Based Exercises

- Drills
- Functional exercises
- Full-scale exercises



Unit 4:
Reassessing Your Readiness Post-Incident

Visual Description: Operations-Based Exercises

Instructor Notes

Operations-Based Exercises

Operations-Based Exercises are normally “higher” level exercises that are used to validate policies, plans, procedures, and resources that were solidified in discussion-based exercises. Operations-based exercises can be characterized by actual response, mobilization of apparatus and resources, and commitment of personnel, usually over an extended period of time. Operations-based exercises include drills, functional exercises, and full-scale exercises.

- *Drills:* A drill is a coordinated, supervised activity usually employed to test a single specific operation or function in a single agency. Drills are commonly used to provide training on new equipment, develop or test new policies or procedures, or practice and maintain current skills. A drill could be used to test a particular function within the Incident Command System, such as the development of an Incident Action Plan. A drill could be used to test elements of a community’s notification or warning system.
- *Functional Exercises:* A functional exercise is designed to test and evaluate individual capabilities, multiple functions or activities within a function, or interdependent groups of functions. A functional exercise focuses on exercising policies, plans, procedures, and resources of the Incident Command System and/or the Emergency Operations Center. Events in a functional exercise are simulated through a series of messages that provide event updates that drive the activity. During a functional exercise, the actual movement of personnel and equipment is simulated. One of the major characteristics of a functional exercise is the simulated feedback provided to the exercise participants from a simulation cell/exercise control group.

Operations-Based Exercises (Continued)

- *Full-Scale Exercises:* A full-scale exercise is the most complex exercise. Full-scale exercises are multiagency, multijurisdictional exercises that can test many facets of emergency management response and recovery. A full-scale exercise focuses on implementing and analyzing policies, plans, procedures, and resources developed in discussion-based exercises and refined in previous, smaller, operations-based exercises. The events for a full-scale exercise are projected through a scripted exercise scenario. Full-scale exercises are conducted in a real-time, stressful environment that should closely mirror a real event. First responders and resources are mobilized and deployed to the scene where they conduct their actions as if a real incident has occurred. Emergency Operations Centers (or other MAC Entities) should actively participate in full-scale exercises.



Visual 4.26

Comprehensive Exercise Program

- Incorporates all types of exercises
- Includes all important players
- Increases in complexity



Unit 4:
Reassessing Your Readiness Post-Incident

Visual Description: Comprehensive Exercise Program

Instructor Notes

Suggest that jurisdictions that do not have comprehensive exercise programs should develop one. Explain that a comprehensive exercise program:

- Incorporates all types of exercises.
- Includes all important players in response and coordination.
- Increases in complexity, until all response and coordination capabilities are tested.

Emphasize that a comprehensive exercise program provides several important benefits:

- It fosters communication and cooperation among agencies and departments that do not work together on a day-to-day basis.
- It enables jurisdictions to test their response and coordination capabilities before they are put to the test in an actual incident.
- It helps keep personnel current in their emergency or disaster jobs, making them use skills that they may not use on a daily basis.



Visual 4.27

Using Exercise Feedback

Use exercise feedback to:

- Improve planning
- Develop/Revise policies and procedures
- Identify additional training needs



Unit 4:
Reassessing Your Readiness Post-Incident

Visual Description: Using Exercise Feedback

Instructor Notes

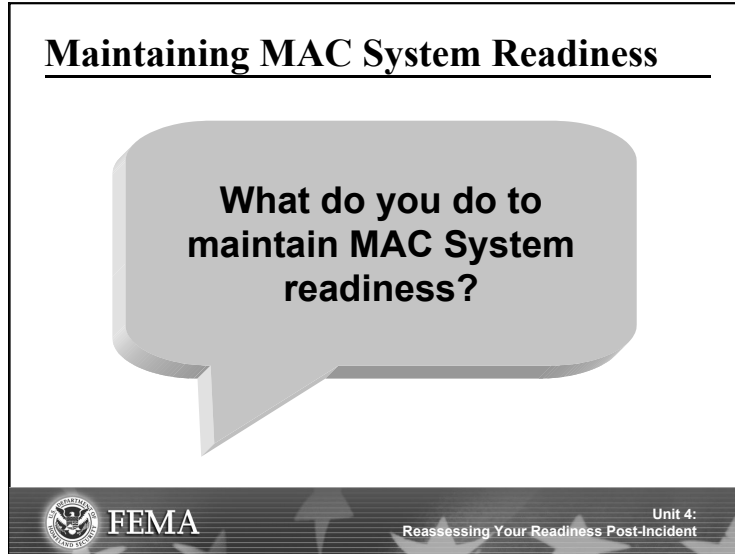
Remind the students that exercise feedback is useful for:

- Improving the EOP.
- Developing or revising policies and procedures.
- Identifying additional training needs.

Urge the group to use exercise feedback to improve overall response and coordination activities.



Visual 4.28



Visual Description: What do you do to maintain Multiagency Coordination System readiness?

Instructor Notes

Remind the group that incidents often occur without warning. Then, ask:

What do you do to maintain Multiagency Coordination System readiness?

Allow the group time to respond. Then, display the next visual.



Visual 4.29

Steps for Maintaining MAC System Readiness

- Replenish resources
- Update rosters, media lists, and other contact information
- Conduct tests, training, and exercises
- Maintain/Update equipment
- Follow up and implement recommendations from exercises



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Unit 4:
Reassessing Your Readiness Post-Incident

Visual Description: Steps for Maintaining Multiagency Coordination System Readiness

Instructor Notes

Summarize the students' responses by telling the group that five steps they must take after an incident to prepare for the next incident include:

- Replenishing resources. Resources—both response resources and coordination resources—become depleted during an incident. A complete inventory of resources should be taken to determine what has been used and what needs to be reconditioned. Inventories should be replenished at the earliest opportunity to ensure future readiness.
- Updating rosters, media lists, and other contact information. Rosters, media lists, and other contact information change frequently. They should be updated to reflect new information as soon as possible after an incident.
- Conduct tests, training, and exercises. As covered earlier in this unit, tests, training, and exercises help improve operations, keep skills current, bring the jurisdiction together, and provide feedback for revising the EOP. Tests, training, and exercises should be ongoing in accordance with the jurisdiction's exercise plan.
- Maintain/Update equipment. Communications equipment, generators, vehicles, etc. necessary to support the MAC System should be maintained and updated on a regular schedule.
- Follow up and implement recommendations from exercises, after-action reports and participant debriefings.

Point out that the jurisdiction's Emergency Operations Plan should identify who is responsible for carrying out these five steps.



Visual 4.30

Unit Summary

- Assessing operations is key to improving readiness for the next incident.
- Lessons learned should be captured through various means and used as a starting point for targeting efforts for improvement.
- Using a model helps keep improvement efforts on target.
- Incident assessment and other information should be used to maintain MAC System readiness.



Unit 4:
Reassessing Your Readiness Post-Incident

Visual Description: Unit Summary

Instructor Notes

Summarize the key points in this unit by making the following points:

- Assessing operations is key to improving readiness for the next incident. Assessment can be made efficiently by:
 - Reviewing and analyzing what happened.
 - Identifying what went well and what didn't.
- Lessons learned should be captured using a variety of methods and used as a starting point for targeting efforts for improvement.
- Using a simple model is a good way to keep improvement efforts on track:
 - By identifying the problem, it is possible to isolate areas that require adjustment to improve readiness.
 - By exploring all options, the right solution can be identified.
 - After identifying solutions, they should be confirmed by testing, training, and exercising.
- Incident assessment information should be used to update the EOP, revise policies, and procedures, and maintain Multiagency Coordination System readiness.

Ask if anyone has any questions about anything presented in this unit. Transition to the next unit by telling the group that they will participate in a tabletop exercise to allow them to apply what they've learned in this course.

Notes: