



# Tabletop Exercise Programs

# Agenda

- Overview of today's exercise
- Step 1 scenario briefing
- Step 2 facilitated discussion
- Step 3 scenario briefing

# Operations Security Reminder

Due to the nature of the content, this exercise is classified as Business Sensitive. It contains information intended for limited use within the company that, if disclosed, could be expected to have a serious adverse effect on the operations, assets, or reputation of the company.

Sensitive information, even if notional, should not be left in public view.

# Scenario Overview

# What is a Tabletop Exercise

A **Tabletop Exercise** is a discussion-based exercise in response to a scenario intended to generate a dialogue on various issues to facilitate a conceptual understanding, identify strengths and areas for improvement, and/or change perceptions about plans, policies, or procedures.

-FEMA Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Guide, 2020

A Tabletop Exercise **simulates an emergency** in an informal, stress-free environment.”

-WHO Exercise Manual, 2017

# Design and Purpose

## Exercise Design

Based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and designed for private sector organizations, such as businesses, retail establishments, and nonprofit organizations.

## Purpose

Through facilitated group discussion, the exercise aims to help organizations assess their business continuity plans, identify actions that can help them protect their employees and customers, and identify actions to minimize the impact of an outbreak on their business operations.

# Rules of the Tabletop Exercise

- No fault environment
- There are no wrong answers
- This is a discussion, not an evaluation
- Respect the views of others
- Reply to the scenario as you would in real life in your current position
- Do not fight the scenario
- Assume your jurisdiction has only the assets and capabilities it has today

# Overarching Exercise Objectives

- Discuss the role of company leadership in considering and making decisions on potential community mitigation measures.
- Discuss and determine what measures our company can/should implement to ensure business continuity and maintain a viable workforce during the scenario.
- Discuss and determine how we will develop and adapt our crisis communication strategy as the scenario evolves.
- Discuss and determine what policy changes may be necessary to support the response to the scenario.
- Discuss risks to our company supply chains and the means to mitigate those risks.

# Step 1: Scenario Overview

# Scenario Disclaimer

- This exercise is for educational and informational purposes.
- The events described in the scenario are fictional and intended only for the purpose of participating in this exercise.

# Scenario Highlights

# Policy and Planning: Key Questions

- What are your immediate plans/actions?
- What critical resources or supplies are you most concerned about being affected by a disruption in your supply chain?
- Does your organization have legal and/or regulatory requirements/obligations that you must comply with, even during a public health emergency?
- How would your organization financially sustain a significant reduction of business?
- What potential policy issues are you most concerned about and what immediate actions can you take, if any, to address them?

# Incident Management: Key Questions

- Who is responsible for managing your organization's response to the scenario?
- What are the most significant challenges you anticipate regarding managing your organization's response to the incident, and what immediate actions can you take, if any, to address them?
- How will you work with state and/or local government to designate your business as essential, allowing you to stay open through lockdowns, curfews, etc.?

# Crisis Communication: Key Questions

- What critical messages will you need to communicate to the following groups?
  - Staff
  - Customers
  - Vendors/suppliers

# Tabletop Exercise Overview

- Please provide 2-3 strengths that you observed during this exercise
- Please provide 2-3 areas for improvement you observed during this exercise
  - Please document detailed recommendations to address these areas in your Participant Feedback Form

# Summary Report

- Please fill out your **Participant Feedback Forms (PFFs)** as thoroughly as possible
  - These will support the development of the Summary Report
- The exercise planning team will develop a Summary Report by this date.
  - The Summary Report will identify gaps/issues as well as layout corrective actions we can take to address them
- Please provide your PFFs and any other feedback by this time.

# QUESTIONS?

Matt Spencer, CSP, SHRM-CP  
U.S.Poultry & Egg Association

[m Spencer@uspoultry.org](mailto:m Spencer@uspoultry.org)

678-514-1982