



FEMA

Fact Sheet

National Exercise Program (NEP). National Level Exercise - Capstone Exercise 2014

The National Preparedness Goal (NPG) calls for 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. To achieve the Goal, the National Preparedness System (NPS) includes an integrated set of guidance, programs, and processes that enable the Nation to build, sustain, and deliver the core capabilities within the context of the five mission areas: Prevention, Protection, Mitigation, Response, and Recovery. The NPS enables a collaborative, whole community approach to national preparedness that engages individuals, families, communities, the private and nonprofit sectors, faith-based organizations, and all levels of government.

As a component of the NPS, the National Exercise Program (NEP) serves to test and validate core capabilities. Participation in exercises, simulations, or other activities, including real world incidents, helps organizations validate their capabilities and identify shortfalls. Exercises also help organizations see their progress toward meeting their preparedness objectives.

The Capstone Exercise, formerly titled the National Level Exercise (NLE), is conducted every two years as the final component of each NEP progressive exercise cycle. The Capstone Exercise 2014 will examine the Nation's collective ability to coordinate and conduct risk assessments, and implement National Frameworks and associated plans to deliver core capabilities.

Further the Capstone Exercise 2014 will:

- Assess the Nation's performance against the 2013-14 NEP Principals' Objectives;
- Evaluate the readiness of local, state, territorial, tribal, and federal officials to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from catastrophic incidents in a coordinated and unified manner; and
- Satisfy the requirements for a national level exercise as described in the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act.

The Capstone Exercise 2014 will enable Federal stakeholders to demonstrate operational coordination and information sharing capabilities with the private sector and other non-traditional partners as well as fulfill mandated exercise requirements or internal assessments to validate capabilities and identify key issues or potential shortfalls. The exercise will also encourage senior-level participation from all stakeholders, ensuring effective collaboration of decision-makers across the whole community.

"FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards."

The Capstone Exercise 2014 is a complex emergency preparedness exercise comprised of five distinct, but linked, component events. The Alaska Shield 2014 exercise, sponsored by the State of Alaska to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the 1964 Great Alaskan Earthquake, will provide the central scenario elements: significant damage from both the quake and the tsunami it triggers will affect the greater Pacific Northwest. Capstone Exercise 2014 incorporates several preparedness activities sponsored by other departments and agencies and is designed to educate and prepare the whole community for complex, large-scale disasters and emergencies.

The following component events are integrated into the Capstone Exercise to examine the core capabilities described in the National Preparedness Goal. This multi-event design recognizes the need for comprehensive all-hazards planning and the complexity to ensure exercise objectives are met.

- **ALASKA SHIELD:** Alaska Shield commemorates the anniversary of the 1964 9.2 magnitude Great Alaskan Earthquake by replicating the earthquake's effects and resulting tsunami.
- **ARDENT SENTRY 14:** The Department of Defense aligned key components of the annual ARDENT SENTRY 14 exercise with ALASKA SHIELD, focusing on Defense Support to Civilian Authorities' mission.
- **Nuclear Weapon Accident/Incident Exercise:** The Nuclear Weapon Accident/Incident Exercise (NUWAIX) 2014 accident occurs during a secure transportation convoy of nuclear weapons within the Continental United States. Intelligence and national leadership will need to quickly determine the cause and significance of the accident.
- **Eagle Horizon 2014:** Eagle Horizon 2014 will focus on continuity of operations and reconstitution planning, requiring Federal departments and agencies to activate continuity plans and perform their Primary Mission Essential Functions from their alternate facilities.
- **Silver Phoenix 2014:** The Silver Phoenix combination of operations- and discussion-based exercises will examine the full range of recovery efforts and operations commencing upon the notification that a catastrophic incident has occurred. The exercises will explore the challenges associated with examining, prioritizing, and conducting recovery activities involving multiple geographically dispersed and competing events using the National Disaster Recovery Framework.

FEMA's National Exercise Division (NED) facilitates the Capstone Exercise 2014. NED provides exercise support, resources, and related doctrine to achieve the National Preparedness Goal. FEMA NED oversees the NEP, which is the principal exercise mechanism for examining the preparedness and measuring the readiness of the United States across the entire homeland security enterprise by designing, coordinating, conducting, and evaluating a progressive cycle of exercises that rigorously tests the United States' ability to perform missions or functions that prevent, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.