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HOW TO CONDUCT TRAINING EXERCISES

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Preface

The US Army must be prepared to fight and achieve victory in combat operations conducted anywhere in the world. Moreover, the Army must be prepared to conduct military operations in support of national policy objectives through tactical engagements and logistical support at any level of intensity within the spectrum of conflict. It must be ready for war in deserts, arctic regions, jungles, and mountains, as well as in urban areas. It must be ready to defeat modern and well-equipped armies, as well as small, lightly equipped irregular forces. Training exercises help achieve the high level of readiness needed to defeat the enemy.

Training exercises provide an excellent environment for the simultaneous performance of multiechelon responsibilities to evaluate and to sustain the skills of soldiers, leaders, teams, staffs, and units. Exercises simulate battle conditions to train leaders, staffs, and units in their wartime missions. They also train leaders for mission-unique conditions and for applying the best tactics to the unit mission, enemy, terrain, and troops available (METT). Some exercises employ minimal troop support in providing commanders and staffs realistic practice in executing wartime missions. Other exercises combine complete units, including those from other services and nations in order to train critical teamwork and coordination skills.

This manual provides commanders, staffs, and exercise planners with doctrine, guidance, and examples for planning, conducting, and controlling training exercises.

FM 25-4, which is one of the 25-series of training manuals, covers the conduct of training exercises. Beginning with fundamental training theory, this manual discusses how to determine training needs and how to plan for and conduct the appropriate exercises. It concludes with sample scenarios for exercises.

This manual is written for commanders, staffs, and exercise planners primarily at battalion level and above. It applies to both Active and Reserve Component units. The concepts described herein, however, are applicable at any level. It applies to combat arms, combat support, and combat service support units.

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Unless otherwise stated, whenever The masculine or feminine gender is used, both are intended.

Training Management and Training Exercises

TRAINING MANAGEMENT

Commanders are responsible for all organizational training. They evaluate soldier and unit proficiency. They identify the training objectives and provide the necessary training guidance. They ensure that the training is supported with the needed resources and that it is properly planned and conducted. They then conduct and evaluate the training and obtain feedback.

Training management is the continuous process commanders use to develop unit training programs. The goal of training management is the best combination of resources, materials, guidance, and time to meet specific training requirements. The training management functions depicted in Figure 1 apply equally to training exercises and to all training conducted in a unit. All management functions in the process take place at the same time. Training management and its applications are explained in detail in FM 25-2.

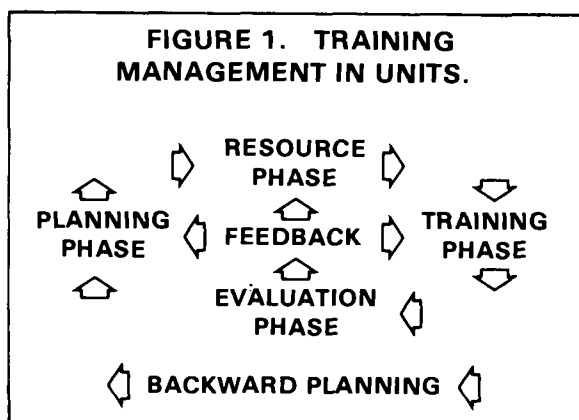
planners must know the unit missions, goals, and objectives and the guidance from higher headquarters. They evaluate unit and soldier proficiency and obtain feedback from recent unit training activities. Commanders add their knowledge and experience to this basic information and develop training programs that specifically address unit and soldier training requirements.

RESOURCES

Training plans specify training events or activities that require resources and support. To implement those plans, resource actions—

- Identify.
- Program.
- Coordinate.
- Obtain.
- Provide the training support necessary.

Training events and activities identified during the planning phase provide input for the assessment of resources required to conduct effective training. Feedback on how well current and past training was supported with resources is also essential input in preparation of the resource assessment.



PLANNING

Planning for training requires input from several sources. Commanders and their

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During long-range planning, commanders and their staffs identify and request resources that require long lead times. During short-range planning, they identify and coordinate resources requiring shorter lead times. In the near-term planning period, they make final arrangements and provide resources to units.

TRAINING

Training can be as simple as performance-oriented training on a soldier's manual task. It can also be as complex as a field training exercise (FTX) using MILES and opposing forces (OPFORs). The training phase requires guidance with appropriate resources based on long-range, short-range, and near-term plans. FM 25-3 provides directions and examples for the conduct of training.

EVALUATIONS

Evaluation is a continuous process. Commanders continually evaluate planning and resource actions to ensure that they meet unit needs and comply with guidance from higher headquarters. Higher headquarters evaluate their own planning and resource actions, as well as those of subordinate units to make sure that they are mutually supporting and focus on the unit mission. Commanders at all echelons evaluate how leaders and soldiers perform. Based upon their evaluations, commanders provide feedback to the chain of command, to the trainers, and to those being trained.

TRAINING EXERCISES

Training in units develops and sustains those individual and collective skills that soldiers and units (including squads, crews, and sections) need to accomplish their missions. To help soldiers' and leaders learn and sustain their skills, commanders develop

training programs that implement the best mix of individual, leader, and collective training.

Training in units follows the hierarchy in Figure 2, which FM 25-1 and FM 25-2 discuss in detail. FM 25-3 assists leaders and trainers to conduct training at company level and below. Collective training involves the upper four levels of the hierarchy. The training exercises described in this manual also apply to these levels but concentrate on unit and combined arms and services proficiency.

FIGURE 2. TRAINING HIERARCHY.

**COMBINED ARMS AND SERVICES
PROFICIENCY**

UNIT PROFICIENCY

PLATOON PROFICIENCY

CREW PROFICIENCY

INDIVIDUAL PROFICIENCY

PURPOSES

The diversity of organizations, equipment, and environment inherent in air-land battles presents a major challenge to commanders. They must train soldiers and leaders who can effectively integrate the unit's weapon systems and doctrine to defeat an enemy that may be numerically superior. Training exercises are an effective way to build the teamwork necessary to meet this challenge. All training exercises—

- Sustain and reinforce individual and collective skills.
- Develop and sustain command and control skills of commanders and their staffs.
- Support multiechelon training.

Individual and Collective Skills

Training exercises combine individual skills, leader skills, drills, and weapon systems proficiency. Training exercises reinforce and sustain proficiency in individual and collective skills in units. In addition, exercises provide training on collective tasks found in Army Training and Evaluation Programs (ARTEPs) and integrate all elements of the combined arms team. ARTEP tasks are modified as required to accommodate each unit's METT.

Command and Control Skills

Command and control training sustains skill proficiency for leaders, staffs, and individual soldiers. It reinforces common skills and those particular to duty positions. It trains each echelon to respond to the needs of higher, lower, adjacent, and attached combat, combat support (CS), and combat service support (CSS) units. Responding to subordinate units is particularly important. Inexperienced commanders and staffs tend to orient themselves to respond upward and overlook the needs of subordinate units. One of the prime purposes of training exercises is to teach leaders to orient on the needs of subordinate units in a sequence of timely troop-leading steps that allow units to execute the mission properly.

Doctrine and training support materials for command and control training include such items as scenarios, simulation models, and recommended task lists. The unit can adapt these materials to address its unique METT assessment. Command and control training packages prepared by proponent service schools support MOS cross training and train-up and sustainment training. These packages are for each echelon of the command, including combat support and combat service support.

To win air-land battles, all elements of the combined arms and services team must be integrated and need to function effectively on

the battlefield. Commanders must be competent in their command and control tasks. Battle staffs must be proficient in executing staff planning responsibilities to achieve full integration of supporting arms and services. Training that enhances these skills should receive emphasis at battalion level and above. The three categories of command and control training are battle staff training, survivability training, and combined arms and services training.

Battle Staff Training. Battle staff training allows commanders and their staffs to fight air-land battles in diverse command post configurations under realistic combat conditions as smoothly functioning teams. This training is vital to command and control of units. It develops the proficiency of individual staff members and molds them into trained teams that can effectively manage and coordinate all systems to support the command's mission. Such training requires that individual staff members know the unit's tactical SOPs (TSOPs) thoroughly. The TSOPs must be updated as appropriate to address changes in unit operations. Battle staff training relies heavily on simulations since they are often the only way to present many air-land battle situations and tasks to enable the commander to train his staff.

Survivability Training. Survivability training ensures proficiency during intense and continuous combat. It ensures that individual soldiers and teams can operate effectively in a variety of situations. It involves those routine tasks that units must perform well to ensure their survival. Examples include—

- Operations in nuclear, biological, or chemical (NBC) environments.
- Operations in hostile electronic warfare (EW) environments.
- Operations using various command post (CP) configurations.

- Operations required to feed, arm, fuel, and maintain the units' command and control elements.
- Procedures for succession of command.
- Limited visibility operations.
- Activation of alternate communication methods.
- Activation of alternate command posts.
- The hand-off between command posts (tactical CP to main CP).
- Passive air defense.
- Local security, to include calls for indirect fire and close air support.

Most survivability tasks are detailed in SOPs and provide standardization within a unit. Thus, they can be practiced prior to exercises. There is often no effective substitute, however, for full-scale exercises using all assigned equipment and personnel in a simulated combat environment to assess unit survivability proficiency in an environment that simultaneously employs all systems to full capacity.

Combined Arms and Services Training. Proficiency in combined arms and services training is required for units, staffs, and commanders to fight and win air-land battles. Examples of systems required to be integrated into training are—

- Fire support.
- Intelligence.
- Electronic warfare.
- Airspace management.
- Air defense artillery.
- Ground maneuver.
- Antiarmor.
- Combat support.
- Combat service support.

A single level of command and control first attains proficiency through battle staff training and survivability training. Battle simulations are an important means currently available for commanders and staffs to practice combined arms integration. Once technical proficiency by the battle staff has been achieved, it should be integrated with supporting, supported, and adjacent units in full-scale exercises against a target array or OPFOR that realistically represents the enemy. Although the battlefield cannot be replicated completely, it should be represented accurately to include electronic warfare, sensor, and electronic intelligence targeting. Training aids such as emitters, transponders, jammers, and OPFOR vehicles to represent the enemy formations allow the commander to train the unit to operate under combat conditions.

PHASES

Training exercises contain three phases: preexercise, execution, and postexercise. The preexercise phase covers planning and preparation. It ends with the start of the execution phase (STARTEX). The execution phase begins at STARTEX and concludes with the end of the exercise (ENDEX). During the execution phase, player units participate in the exercise, which is controlled and evaluated according to plans developed during the preexercise. The postexercise phase, beginning at ENDEX, covers reviews and reports. All training events and exercises should conclude with after-action reviews (AARs). These reviews provide training as substantive as the activity itself. In AARs, commanders determine accomplishment of exercise objectives based on input from staffs, controllers, evaluators, umpires, and OPFORs, as appropriate. Participants should be encouraged to discuss what happened and why. They should be encouraged to suggest solutions and offer

recommendations. To overcome shortcomings, exercise participants can make a valuable contribution to training evaluation efforts by gathering information and analyzing the critical lessons learned. These lessons become essential elements of information (EEI) for commanders and trainers in the ongoing training management process. AARs must be conducted periodically during the exercise to gain maximum training benefit.

AARs should be used at every echelon, and they should occur as often as necessary to ensure that participants learn from the training conducted. If the exercise divides into deployment, attack, and defense, for example, an AAR should be conducted after each phase. If significant events, such as a movement to initial positions and a deliberate river crossing, occur in a phase, an AAR should likewise be held after each

significant training event. Appendix G contains additional information on AARs.

As soon after ENDEX as possible and prior to leaving the exercise area, controllers, umpires, and evaluators conduct an exit briefing for those players with whom they were closely associated during the execution phase. As soon after ENDEX as possible, the exercise director prepares a formal after-action report for the unit commander. This report, which is distributed through the chain of command, is based on input from controllers, umpires, and evaluators. These reports and the AARs that precede them summarize the exercise. Commanders use them both to observe and evaluate staffs, leaders, and soldiers and to plan future training. The best use of these evaluations is to apply lessons learned to training within the near term (two through six weeks), rather than to file for review prior to the execution of the next major exercise.

CHAPTER 2

Exercise Planning

ANALYSIS

During the planning phase of training management, commanders at each echelon determine the need for training exercises and identify the types they will use. The need for an exercise is based upon—

- Higher headquarters' analysis of subordinate unit proficiency.
- Higher headquarters' issuance of the missions, goals, objectives, and guidance.
- Commanders' evaluations of unit and soldier proficiency.

Higher headquarters employ the exercise planning steps explained in this chapter when directing subordinate units to participate in training exercises. Subordinate units also employ applicable planning steps based on information and orders received from higher headquarters. When commanders direct internal exercises, they must ensure that the exercises meet unit training needs and objectives.

Commanders must first analyze soldier, leader, and unit training proficiency. Then they select a particular type of training exercise. A training analysis must first establish the training requirements and the priorities for unit training programs, as described in FM 25-2. This analysis also determines the training objectives, which are based on the individual and collective skills that need initial or sustainment training. In so doing, the analysis must consider the three categories of command and control training:

- Battle staff training.
- Survivability training.
- Combined arms training.

One or more of these categories must be included in the unit training objectives and integrated in the exercise. The exercise objec-

tives should be specific, relevant, realistically obtainable, measurable, and supportive of exercise goals. Exercise objectives should be organized into functional areas to highlight activities that need improvement. Properly stated objectives provide players, controllers, umpires, and evaluators with a solid basis for conducting their evaluation and AARs. When the exercise objectives are established, the type of exercise to be conducted can be selected.

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An exercise must never be conducted simply for its own sake. It must always help to attain training objectives, which are tied to the unit mission.

SELECTION

Once the initial analysis is completed, commanders determine the type of exercises to be conducted. Comparing the objectives with the kind of training that each exercise provides, they identify the proper exercise, within resource constraints, that can best meet the objectives. Table 1 shows the exercises that best fit the command and control

training categories for each echelon of command.

Map exercises (MAPEXs) are employed to teach staff planning and coordination, as well as preparation of estimates and operations orders. They are not conducted below battalion level. Commanders employ tactical exercises without troops (TEWTs) to teach the effective use of terrain to subordinate leaders. TEWTs involve specific tactical problems, employing unite and weapon systems. Command post exercises (CPXs) are effective in training members of staffs, command posts, and communications systems above company level. FTXs provide realistic survivability and combined arms training for the total force. Battle staff

TABLE 1. EXERCISE SELECTION MATRIX.

EXERCISES	PLATOON OR COMPANY				ECHELONS ABOVE	
	TEAM	BATTALION	BRIGADE	DIVISION	CORPS	CORPS
MAPEX		A,C	A,C	A,C	A,C	A,C
TEWT	C	C	C	C	C	
CPX		A,B,C	A,B,C	A,B,C	A,B,C	A,B,C
FTX	B,C	B,C	B,C			
LFX	B,C	B,C				
FCX	A,C	A,C				
CFX	B,C	B,C	B,C	A,B,C	A,B,C	

Legend:

A - battle staff training

B - survivability training

C - systems training

CFX - command field exercise

CPX - command post exercise

FCX - fire coordination exercise

LFX - live-fire exercise

MAPEX - map exercise

TEWT - tactical exercise without troops

sustainment training does occur in FTXs. However, to preclude the delays and inefficient use of troop-leading time that normally occur in the preliminary training of the staff, they should not be selected solely for this purpose. Battle staff skills should be sharpened through CPXs, TEWTs, and MAPEXs prior to an FTX.

Table 2 aids in selecting the appropriate exercise. It shows training exercises and

some of the systems and objectives that can be trained effectively. The "X" indicates the exercise which best affords realistic training in the employment of the system or attainment of the objective indicated. For example, the training objective "Staff procedures" is shown only for the MAPEX, CPX, and command field exercise (CFX) since they are the most effective ways to train those objectives.

TABLE 2. EXERCISE EFFECTIVENESS.

SYSTEMS OR OBJECTIVES	MAPEX	TEWT	CPX	CFX	FCX	LFX	FTX
Use of terrain		X		X		X	X
Actual maneuver of units				X	X	X	X
Staff procedures	X		X	X			X
Weapons employment		X		X	X	X	X
Fire support planning and coordination			X	X	X	X	X
Combat support				X		X	X
NBC operations			X	X			X
Systems integration	X		X	X	X		X
Survivability			X	X			X
Contingency operations	X		X				
Communications/ electronics			X	X			X
Intelligence/EW			X	X			X
Direct and indirect fire control and distribution				X	X	X	X
Air defense	X		X	X			X
Airspace management			X	X	X		X
Sensor/CEWI/target cell interface	X		X	X			X
Engineer systems*	X	X	X	X			X

*Mobility, countermobility, and survivability operations

LEGEND: CEWI - combat-electronic warfare intelligence EW - electronic warfare

CONSIDERATIONS

FLEXIBILITY

The planning phase must recognize the value of flexibility and the necessity for being thorough. Planners must plan for alternate types of exercises in case weather or other constraints prohibit the originally scheduled exercise. For example, if a brigade needs an FTX but there is a chance of funds being reduced or the possibility of excessive maneuver damage, contingency plans for a CFX or CPX should be prepared concurrently.

Exercises must be flexible. They should allow subordinate commanders the freedom to innovate within the framework of new or existing doctrine, tactics, techniques, and operating procedures. They should not follow rigid timetables that inhibit training and learning. Instead, they should establish schedules that provide sufficient time to correct mistakes and ensure learning and AARs at all levels.

RESOURCES

Once a headquarters decides to conduct a training exercise, the needed resources must be identified and procedures begun to obtain them, in accordance with the training management procedures described in FM 25-2. The general steps below must be taken before beginning detailed work. They indicate whether the exercise can meet the training objectives. If any area appears inadequate, the commander must decide whether to proceed or consider an alternate training activity.

Facilities and Land

Planners must consider the environment for the exercise and the impact of weather. If inadequate land or facilities will seriously degrade training, planners may have to alter the exercises. For example, if an FTX has been selected but the available training areas are not large enough to allow unit tactics to be realistically played, the planners may—

- Reduce the number of units in the exercise.
- Use a MAPEX or a CPX in place of an FTX.
- Conduct the exercise at a lower echelon.

Range facilities in the continental United States (CONUS) usually limit LFXs to company team level. The exception is the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, California. At the NTC, resources and distances permit LFXs at battalion task force level. Except for scaled range training, range limitations also restrict fire coordination exercises (FCXs) to small units. Battle staff training during FCXs is generally limited to—

- Fire support coordination.
- Fire control.
- Preparation and issuance of plans and orders.

When exercises use privately owned land, planners must also consider maneuver damage control.

Support

Training exercises require support. Some exercises consume large quantities of allocated resources such as fuel, spare parts, flying hours, and maneuver area time. The planners must ensure that the exercises can be conducted within the resource levels and that the training received justifies the resources expended.

Commanders and staffs ensure that internal and external support equipment is sufficient. For example, communications and transportation for players, controllers, umpires, and evaluators must be adequate. Player units, including HQs, should use only organic transportation, communications, and TOE equipment. Doing so teaches them to employ the full capabilities of the unit. They should not rely on outside assistance to replace systems that are not mission capable

or to beef up the authorized strength of the staff. Controller, umpire, and evaluator equipment must not come from player units.

Time

The time allocated for each exercise must permit appropriate troop-leading steps to be exercised, as well as develop tactical situations that lead to logical and sound tactical employment of player units. The time should also be allocated for conducting complete logistical support of tactical operations, as well as for an appropriate AAR.

PARTICIPANTS

Planners must consider whether or not units or groups of individuals to be trained are of the proper size or strength to benefit from the type of exercise selected. For example, the soldiers of a tank platoon consisting of two-man tank crews can be expected to gain very little from an LFX. Personnel shortages might also cause commanders to conduct CFXs rather than FTXs.

BATTLE SIMULATIONS

Battle simulations, both manual and computer-supported or computer-assisted, provide effective training in many battle staff skills. Battle simulations can be used with virtually any scenario. They are readily adapted to specific local conditions and unit missions.

Simulations will not correct all command and control training problems or substitute for field training. If properly used, they can provide a readily acceptable means for exercising significant elements of the command and control system.

Battle simulations have the following characteristics:

- They are relatively inexpensive.
- They do not require large training areas.

- They save training time.
- They reduce preexercise and postexercise requirements.
- They are flexible and easily tailored to unique training objectives.
- They can present situations (nuclear, chemical, tactical air) that cannot be reproduced in other training environments because of safety or expense.

Battle simulations encourage multiechelon training. Higher and lower echelons can be exercised simultaneously with a minimum expenditure of valuable training resources. Simulations can portray joint service operations involving the Air Force, Navy, and Marines, as well as the combined elements of other nations. Battle simulations can also portray various equipment mixes or degraded operations, allowing commanders and staffs to exercise back-up systems and procedures.

Battle simulations provide realistic cues and feedback to the command as a result of decisions made by higher, lower, and adjacent units. Each command group executes and subsequently modifies its plans, based on the situation. Simulations force command groups to adjust plans, organizations, assets, and firepower to cope with changing battlefield situations. They may also force adjustments in command post configurations and procedures to deal effectively with unforeseen situations.

Battle simulations can create unique mixtures of organizations, equipment, missions, and operational situations. They do this while realistically portraying the unit METT. Questions and comments about battle simulations may be addressed to Deputy Commandant, Command and General Staff College, ATTN: ATSL-SWN, Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027; AUTOVON 552-4612/2442, Commercial (913) 684-4612/2442.

Tactical engagement simulations such as MILES add significant realism to field exercises. They do so by confronting leaders and soldiers with realistic simulations of direct fire weapon systems in a training environment. Only units that have demonstrated high levels of proficiency during battle drill

and situational training exercises should use MILES for training. Because MILES is the most realistic training short of actual combat, it should be approached with detailed planning that keeps the training objectives clearly in mind. For details on the planning and use of MILES, see TC 25-6.

TABLE 3. CURRENT AND PROJECTED BATTLE TRAINING SIMULATIONS.

ECHELON	MANUAL SIMULATIONS	COMPUTER-SUPPORTED, OR COMPUTER-ASSISTED SIMULATIONS
CORPS	War Eagle First Battle-BC*	TACSIM
DIVISION	First Battle First Battle-BC*	CAMMS II*
BRIGADE	Pegasus First Battle-BC*	CAMMS CAMMS II*
BATTALION	Pegasus First Battle-BC* Transwar I/II/III*	CATTS CAMMS CAMMS II* ARTBASS* MACE* ATLAS I/II* MEDMOD*

LEGEND:

ARTBASS - Army Training Battle Simulation System
 ATLAS - A Tactical Logistical and Air Simulation
 BC - battalion through corps
 CAMMS - Computer-Assisted Map Maneuver Simulation
 MEDMOD - Medical Module
 TACSIM - Tactical Simulation

SITUATIONAL TRAINING EXERCISES

The use of situational training exercises (STXs) should be considered in the development of an exercise. They teach the “best” or preferred way to accomplish a task and area standard way in which a task should be executed. They are developed by the service schools to teach the doctrinally preferred way

to perform a specific mission. FM 25-3 explains the STX concept. STXs can facilitate training through the application of standardized tactical formations and employment. Thus, they should be considered in planning and preparing for an exercise, whenever appropriate.

PREEXERCISE PLANS

The preexercise is usually the longest of the three exercise phases. For large exercises, such as the FTX portion of Redeployment of Forces to Germany (REFORGER), this phase can take longer than a year. The preexercise phase develops all the support plans that govern the execution and postexercise phases.

Planning begins immediately after the decision has been made to conduct an exercise. The planning steps listed below are used to prepare for an exercise. Specific exercises may omit some. These steps are generally sequential; however, some may be performed simultaneously.

- Preparing an exercise directive.
- Assigning responsibilities for planning.
- Conducting research.
- Preparing a supporting plan schedule.
- Preparing an outline plan.
- Conducting a reconnaissance.
- Completing the exercise support plans.
- Preparing the scenario.
- Preparing and issuing the operations plan (OPLAN).
- Publishing the letter of instruction (LOI).
- Preparing the terrain.
- Conducting a rehearsal.

The training objectives and the echelon at which the exercise is to be conducted determine how complex these steps will become. For example, at battalion level there may be little or no need to conduct detailed research or to write a planning schedule. Much of the planning can take place during training meetings. However, at division level, research and written planning schedules are necessary. They can be the key to a successful exercise.

PREPARING AN EXERCISE DIRECTIVE

The headquarters requesting or conducting the exercise issues an exercise directive. It starts the development process.

Before preparing the exercise directive, the exercise planner carefully considers the purpose of the exercise, the objectives stated or implied by the commander, and guidance from higher headquarters. The objectives are the basis for planning and developing the exercise directive. An exercise directive will—

- Name the exercise director and provide for a staff. These personnel will plan the exercise.
- Specify what type of exercise to conduct and state its specific training objectives.
- Indicate the time frame for the exercise, its physical location, and the duration of its execution phase. The location, time, and