



SDGE's PSPS Tabletop Exercise with External Partners

After-Action Report

June 27, 2022

The After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) outlines strengths, as well as areas identified for improvement. For each area for improvement, recommendations are outlined for consideration.



Exercise Overview

Exercise Name	SDG&E's Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) Tabletop with External Partners Exercise
Exercise Dates	June 27, 2022, from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
Scope	This exercise was a three-hour, discussion-based exercise, via Teams.
Purpose	Test SDG&E's understanding of Emergency Operation Center (EOC) activities during a PSPS activation and how coordination and communication with external partners will occur.
Focus Area	Response
Capabilities	Operational Coordination Operational Communication
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify PSPS response procedures and how to maintain coordination with our local and state public safety partner agencies during a PSPS event. 2. Discuss the communication processes for notification to public safety partners, access and functional needs and vulnerable populations, and affected customers during a PSPS event. 3. Demonstrate the channels and processes of decision-making for de-energization and re-energization during a PSPS event.
Threat or Hazard	High Fire Threat combined with Santa Ana Winds
Scenario	A short-lived, moderate strength Santa Ana wind forms with peak gusts of 35-50 mph across backcountry areas. A Red Flag Warning is issued with humidity in teens and pockets of single digits and fairly dry fuels. Winds ramp up and peak overnight, decrease late the following morning, and subside in the afternoon.
Participants	This is an exercise for SDG&E employees and external partners. For a full list of invited agencies and organizations, please see Appendix A.
Point of Contact	Jessica Kunert , Emergency Management Training Manager jkunert@sdge.com

Executive Summary

Structure

SDG&E facilitated a three-hour tabletop exercise as a virtual discussion-based exercise. The purpose of the exercise was to test SDG&E's understanding of Emergency Operation Center (EOC) activities during a PSPS activation and how coordination and communication with external partners will occur.

The operations-based exercise was designed to test and evaluate capabilities and functions while in a realistic, real-time environment. However, the movement of resources and personnel was largely simulated. Players received an overview of the exercise purpose and scenario, then worked through a series of modules:

- Module 1 - Stage 1: Activating PSPS Protocols/Potential to De-energize
- Module 2 - Stage 2: Decision to De-energize and Stage 3: De-energization Initiated
- Module 3 - Stage 4: Initiating Re-energization Protocols and Stage 5: All PSPS Lines Re-energized

Exercise Analysis

The After-Action Report (AAR) provides a detailed list of strengths and areas for improvement identified throughout the exercise and hotwash process. Each strength and area for improvement has been aligned to the most appropriate SDG&E capability.

The areas for improvement provide a statement of the improvement area, an analysis that provides sufficient detail as to why it was identified as an improvement area, recommendations, and an assigned priority level (high, medium, low). An Improvement Plan (IP), outlined at the end of this document, assigns a point of contact for implementing the recommendation as well as a target due date for completion.

Strengths

The following were strengths for the "Operational Coordination" and "Public Information and Warning" core capabilities.

Strength 1: Open and transparent discussion with external partners on SDG&E's PSPS process reasoning reinforced procedural understanding. Discussions included where automation guides decision-making and the subsequent impact on the response.

The exercise included the use of the Public Safety Partner Portal (PSPP) to provide real-time (hourly) information updates to partners during the de-energization and re-energization phases. There was a thorough explanation of the decision-making process during these phases and the impacts on external partners' service delivery.

Strength 2: Contributions from external partners towards exercise planning, exercise scenario development, and participation during the event with hypothetical response actions fostered a collaborative environment.

Partner involvement during the planning stage of the exercise provided information on the framing and prioritizing of topics to target during the event. Incorporating feedback elements from external partners fostered engagement in the PSPS process and allowed more context on external agencies' standard actions.

Strength 3: Strengthened community-based organizations' understanding of SDG&E's notification system and processes.

Notification teams discussed how K2, PSPP, California Office of Emergency Services forms, and e-mail are utilized to support notification requirements to local and state public safety partners. Ancillary requirements for the notification sequence and the information needed to complete those sequences were reviewed.

Areas for Improvement

The following areas require improvement to achieve the full capability level:

Area for Improvement 1: With an annual EOC responder attrition rate of 40%, achieving high confidence and competency levels in each notifications response role continues to be an area of focus.

Analysis: Limited Training and Exercise Division resources consistently adapt to substantial challenges to provide responders with the requisite knowledge of response plans, process, and resources to respond to incidents safely and effectively.

Recommendations: Training & Exercise to offer targeted training for new responders based on frequently asked questions and prior new responder experiences which will facilitate a stronger onboarding.

Priority: High

Area for Improvement 2: The lack of technological support embedded in the notification protocols creates a cumbersome workflow and strains EOC resources.

Analysis: Notifications are one of the most significant activities performed during a PSPS. They, impact community relations, affect coordination with external partners, and can lead to financial penalties if missed. Each phase change within the PSPS notification process requires substantial time and resources from cross-functional teams to manually track, communicate, and execute the complex notification sequence. Manual notification processes detract EOC responders from focusing on strategic tasks to support higher information sharing and engagement with customers and external partners.

Recommendations: Develop an IT project scope to include a notifications workflow management and information dashboard,. Proposed support solutions should simplify notification processes and enhance abilities to meet compliance requirements.

The Notifications Group needs to gather ideas to draft solutions addressing issues that may occur during the notification process and impacting sequence. These solutions should be presented to IT and the Wildfire Mitigation Program (WMP) to initiate the necessary actions.

Priority: High

Area for Improvement 3: SDG&E's AFN program observed opportunities to improve communications with community-based organizations within the High Fire Threat District.

Analysis: The AFN team observed their collaboration with external partners and evaluated potential issues that could occur within service delivery for AFN communities. Communication with community-based organizations based in the High Fire Threat Districts (HFTD) exemplified the need for the utility to continue maintaining consistent communication with these partners and to preemptively mitigate these risks that could impact that communication.

Recommendation: Consideration should be given to pursuing automation within the utility's notification and updating process. Enhancing the K2 system ensures all relevant partners are consistently reached in a timely manner.

Priority: Medium

Area for Improvement 4: Limited sandbox environments create challenges in replicating the realism of systems in a simulated environment.

Analysis: Multiple systems and dashboards utilized during the exercise connect to real-world, live data points such as weather or time stamps. Given the limited simulation functionality of our systems in a “training” or “sandbox” environment, participants had to navigate real-world data that did not match the exercise scenario.

Recommendations: Identify opportunities for additional Emergency Operations Center support systems to develop training environments to achieve more realistic exercise play.

Priority: Low

Appendix A: Improvement Plan

This IP is developed specifically for SDG&E as a result of this exercise. Areas for improvement have been assigned corrective actions, points of contact, and expected completion dates.

Area for Improvement	Corrective Action	SDG&E Capability	Priority Level	Point of Contact	Start Date	Completion Date
Limited sandbox environments create challenges in replicating realism of systems in a simulated environment.	Identify opportunities for additional Emergency Operations Center support systems to develop training environments to achieve more realistic exercise play	Operational Coordination	Low	Jessica Kunert	Q1 2023	In Progress
The lack of technological support created a cumbersome workflow for the notifications process.	<p>Develop an IT project scope to include a notifications workflow management and information dashboard, enhancements to the Emergency Notifications System (ENS) and the Network Management System (NMS). Proposed support solutions should simplify notification processes and enhance abilities to meet compliance requirements.</p> <p>The Notifications Group needs to gather ideas to draft solutions addressing issues that may occur during the notification process and impacting sequence. These solutions should be presented to IT and the Wildfire Mitigation Program (WMP) to initiate the necessary actions.</p>	Operational Coordination	Medium	Mona Freels	Q1 2023	In Progress
SDG&E's AFN program observed opportunities to improve communications with community-based organizations within the High Fire Threat District.	Consideration should be given to pursuing automation within the utility's notification and updating process. Enhancing the K2 system ensures all relevant partners are consistently reached in a timely manner.	Operational Communication	Medium	Victor Roosen	Q3 2022	In Progress

With an annual EOC responder attrition rate of 40%, achieving high confidence and competency levels in each notifications response role continues to be an area of focus.	Training & Exercise to offer targeted training for new responders based on frequently asked questions and prior new responder experiences which will facilitate a stronger onboarding.	Operational Coordination	High	Jessica Kunert	Q3 2022	In Progress
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Appendix B: External Partners

The following table outlines the external partners that participated in this exercise.

First Name	Last Name	Agency / Organization
Aaron	Meleen	San Diego County Sheriff's Department San Marcos Station
Agnes	Luster	AT&T Mobility
Al	Garza	San Diego County Water Authority
Ali	Poorman	FACT, Inc
Anthony	Ravago Sr	Pala Band of Mission Indians
Barbara	Ayers	San Diego County OES
Bixi	Howe	American Red Cross
Bobby	Guess	AT&T
Brandon	Winslow	General Atomics Aeronautical Systems
Brian	van Blommestein	T-Mobile
Chuck	Westerheide	San Diego County Public Safety Group
Cliff	Rlnder	San Diego Sheriff's Department
Cody	Gallagher	San Diego County Office of Emergency Services
Corina	Jimenez	City of Encinitas
Cruz	Ponce	Cal OES
Curtis	Fouyer	California Highway Patrol - El Cajon Area

First Name	Last Name	Agency / Organization
David	Parsons	Oceanside Fire Department
Debbie	Schoemann	Charter Communications
Delocht		San Diego County Sheriff
Dominique	Fonseca	County of San Diego Office of Emergency Services
Don	Butz	Lakeside Fire District
Dru	Dunton	CPUC
Hannah	Chasteene	City of San Diego's Office of Emergency Services
Jake	Wolf	California Department of Education
Jamie	Smith	San Marcos Fire
Jeff	Chumbley	Poway Fire Department
Jeff	Fuentes	CAL FIRE/OSFM Utility Fire Mitigation Unit
Jeff	Jubera	T-Mobile
Jennifer	Champlin	Communications - Cox Communications
Jennifer	Chiavone	PG&E
Jennifer	Dymicki	City of San Diego - Office of Emergency Services
Jess	Cosentino	Charter Communications
Jessica	Obando	General Atomics
Jessica	Parks	City of Poway
Jim	Shortal	Cox Communications

First Name	Last Name	Agency / Organization
Jocelyn	Barrueta	FACT
Joe	Anderson	California Department of Education
Joe	Scuri	San Diego Fire- Rescue
Jonathan	Baltazar	EM Training & Exercise
Jose	Ysea	City of San Diego - Office of Emergency Services
Joseph	Ledesma	T-Mobile
Josh	Overton	AT&T
Justin	Matsushita	City of Santee
Karl	Spanhak	T-Mobile
Karla	Menzies	San Diego County Sheriff's Department, Representing Poway, Ramona, 4S Ranch Patrol Stations
Kayla	Holmes	American Red Cross
Kevin	Mahr	North County Fire Protection District
Lois	Yum	City of Encinitas
Lt. Michael	Dye	Port of San Diego Harbor Police
Luis	Gastelum	T-Mobile
Luis	Sanchez	SCE Business Resiliency
Marie	Jones-Kirk	City of Carlsbad/Carlsbad Fire Department
Marielena	Castellanos	Office of Emergency Services San Diego County
Mark	Innes	AT&T Wireline

First Name	Last Name	Agency / Organization
Marlon	King	City of Chula Vista, Chula Vista Fire Department
Matthew	Carrigan	General Atomics & Affiliated Companies
Matthew	Glisson	San Diego County Sheriff's Department
Meagan	Schmidt	FACT
Mike	Levasseur	PG&E
Mike	Rand	San Diego County Sheriff's Department
Morgan	Fomby	SDSO
Nancy	Vera	Access to Independence of San Diego, Inc.
Nicholas	Nguyen	The Salvation Army
Paul	Clarke	Padre Dam MWD
Phil	Robinson	City of Laguna Niguel
Ray	Chaney	2-1-1 San Diego
Robert	Andolina	County of San Diego Office of Emergency Services
Scott	Duncan	Valley Center Fire Protection District
Shelby	Chase	CPUC
Simon	Tse	Caltrans
Timothy	Richey	Charter Communications
Tom	Hutchins	Indian Health Council Inc.
Tricia	Utterback	Cal OES