RESILIENCE

TRAINING & EXERCISES

Practice before the pressure is real.

Operational Readiness Guide

A practical framework for Phase 0 orientation, drills, tabletop exercises, compressed simulations, handoff practice, mutual-aid participation, Observe While You Act, and Post-Operational Review.

Outcome First. Operational Truth Always. Technology Supports Humans.

Mavensoft Technologies | Resilience

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PURPOSE

Readiness is built before activation

Resilience training is intended to make the operating discipline familiar before a real incident creates time pressure, incomplete information, changing personnel, degraded communications, and expanding coordination demands.

Readiness principle

The objective is not to perform a perfect exercise. The objective is to expose where operational clarity weakens while there is still time to improve it.

What training should develop

- A shared understanding of Normal, Watch, and Red Alert posture.
- Fast recognition of what changed, what is confirmed, what remains uncertain, and what matters next.
- Clear ownership, escalation, and next-action discipline.
- Reliable shift-to-shift handoffs using the Eight-Part Shift Packet.
- Comfort with primary, backup, tertiary, and last-resort communication and access paths.
- Role-appropriate use of Dynamic Incident Access for outside responders and cooperating organizations.
- The ability to act while simultaneously observing whether the operational picture still matches reality.
- A habit of learning after exercises and operations without turning review into blame.

Phase 0 to Phase 1

Phase 0	Onboarding, configuration preparation, orientation, scenario walkthroughs, training, connection/access testing, and pressure testing.
Readiness Gate	Roles, contacts, permissions, communication paths, escalation routes, and core workflows have been exercised sufficiently to support operational use.
Phase 1	Operational use with continued practice, review, refinement, and periodic pressure testing.

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Progressive practice - not one giant test

Exercise	Typical Time	Primary Skill	Pressure Added	Output
Orientation Drill	20-30 min	Navigation + roles	Low	Questions / configuration notes
One-Hour Drill	~1 hr	Single workflow	Low-Moderate	Completed operational record
Tabletop	60-90 min	Shared decisions	Moderate	Current Reality + decisions
Handoff Drill	30-60 min	Continuity	Moderate	Eight-Part Shift Packet
Compressed Exercise	2-4 hr	8-12 hr simulated activity	High	Situation reports + handoffs
Extended Pressure Test	As designed	Sustained operations	High	Full review package

Short exercises can fit into the normal work cadence. Compressed exercises may simulate eight to twelve hours of activity during approximately two to four hours of training. Extended pressure tests should be reviewed and conducted as needed; a useful working guideline is approximately every six months.

Increase pressure progressively

Level 1	Known facts, stable communications, familiar participants.
Level 2	Missing information, conflicting reports, time pressure.
Level 3	Shift change, outside participants, changing priorities.
Level 4	Degraded communications, delayed feeds, incomplete synchronization.
Level 5	Multiple simultaneous changes requiring prioritization, escalation, and recovery carry-forward.

Do not manufacture chaos for entertainment

Exercise pressure should test the operating discipline, not overwhelm participants with unrealistic injects. Each added complication should have a learning purpose.

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Observe While You Act

Observe While You Act is the advanced discipline of acting effectively while maintaining awareness of the changing operational picture. Teams practice doing the work without losing sight of whether the assumptions supporting that work are still true.

The six-question scan

1. What is happening?	State the current operational reality in plain language.
2. What changed?	Identify meaningful change since the last update or decision.
3. What is verified?	Separate confirmed information from reports, unknowns, and conflicts.
4. What remains uncertain?	Name the uncertainty instead of allowing it to disappear into the narrative.
5. Who owns the next action?	Name the person or role and expected next step.
6. Do assumptions still match reality?	Re-test the plan when conditions, information, access, or priorities change.

Drill method

- Give the team a simple operational objective.
- Begin with a stable Current Reality.
- Introduce one meaningful change.
- Require action and an updated operational picture at the same time.
- Introduce a second change that challenges an earlier assumption.
- Ask the team to identify what must change, what can remain, and who owns the next action.
- Finish with a handoff to a participant who did not lead the first part of the drill.

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The Handoff Challenge

Success test

The handoff works when the incoming person can explain Current Reality, open work, owners, Watch Points, and next actions without depending on the outgoing person to reconstruct the story.

Eight-Part Shift Packet drill

What Changed	Meaningful change during the operational period.
Current Reality	What is true now to the level currently verified.
Open Items	Unresolved work, unknowns, dependencies, and pending verification.
Next Actions	Immediate work with named ownership.
Drift / Risk	Where assumptions, timing, information, or coordination may be weakening.
Escalations	Items requiring higher authority, specialized help, or faster attention.
Handoff Ready	Incoming team has acknowledged and can explain the operational picture.
Close / Carry	Items closed with basis; unresolved work explicitly carried forward.

Injects for a handoff exercise

- A report arrives five minutes before shift change.
- Two credible sources disagree.
- The next owner has changed.
- A communication path fails.
- An outside agency joins late.
- A task is reported complete but supporting verification is missing.

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Dynamic Incident Access Exercise

Large incidents can expand beyond the people enrolled before activation. Training should therefore include the controlled addition of authorized outside participants rather than assuming the original roster will remain sufficient.

Scenario	A mutual-aid partner, utility representative, contractor, or specialized responder must join the operational picture.
Invitation	Authorized participant is invited through an approved email address or mobile phone number.
First login	The invited participant establishes individual credentials and completes required identity/access steps.
Default access	View Only unless additional role-appropriate permissions are specifically authorized.
Auditability	Invitation history, identity, role, activity, and revocation remain visible.
Exit	Access is removed or expires when the operational need ends, as configured.

What to test

- Can the participant gain appropriate access without a shared password?
- Can the team explain what the participant may and may not see or change?
- Can permissions be changed or revoked quickly?
- Can the new participant understand Current Reality without a long verbal reconstruction?
- Can the team preserve ownership when several outside organizations are working simultaneously?

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Degraded-Connectivity Drill

A backup path is not reliable merely because it appears on a diagram. Training should prove that alternate communication and access paths actually work in the Client environment.

Primary	Enterprise connection / normal approved communication path.
Secondary	Cellular hotspot, alternate carrier, or alternate talkgroup.
Tertiary	Satellite, approved mesh, or field relay where configured.
Offline continuity	Approved local capture of text, photos, video, voice, timestamps, GPS, assignments, and checklists where supported.
Reconciliation	When connectivity returns, delayed and local information is compared against the restored system record and discrepancies are resolved.

Exercise inject

At a planned point, remove or simulate failure of the primary path. Require the team to continue the operational record, communicate priority information, identify what did not synchronize, and reconcile the record when the primary path returns.

Pass condition

The team knows which path to use next, can continue capturing essential operational context, and can identify what must be reconciled after restoration.

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Three representative exercises

Wildfire - expanding mutual aid

Wind changes, an evacuation area expands, cellular congestion develops, and additional outside units join. Practice Dynamic Incident Access, conflicting road-status reports, ownership, alternate communications, and a shift handoff.

Flood - slow change becomes operational pressure

River gauges rise faster than forecast, a pump-station access route becomes uncertain, a bridge approach requires inspection, and a utility restoration estimate changes. Practice Watch Points, verification, infrastructure ownership, and recovery carry-forward.

Earthquake - incomplete information under pressure

Scattered damage reports arrive quickly. A hospital is on generator power, a water-main location is uncertain, and bridge status is conflicting. Practice prioritization, source qualification, incomplete information, communications degradation, and executive briefing.

Facilitator rule

Change the conditions, not the lesson

Scenarios should be adapted to the Client's jurisdiction, responsibilities, systems, hazards, plans, terminology, and mutual-aid environment. The purpose is to test continuity of understanding - not to teach a generic incident command system.

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Learn without blame

After exercises, significant Watch periods, Red Alert operations, and major operational transitions, teams should conduct a structured Post-Operational Review. The purpose is ongoing learning and improved readiness.

What worked?	Identify practices, tools, decisions, and communication paths that supported continuity.
Where did clarity drift?	Find moments where information, ownership, assumptions, or handoffs became less reliable.
What surprised us?	Capture conditions or dependencies that were not anticipated.
What failed or nearly failed?	Include technology, process, access, communication, staffing, and coordination.
What should change?	Assign a specific improvement, owner, and target date.
What must be retested?	Do not close an improvement merely because it was documented; verify it in a later drill.

Observe the system while reviewing the people

The review should distinguish an individual mistake from a design weakness. If a reasonable person could repeatedly make the same error because the workflow, interface, permission model, terminology, or communication path is unclear, the system itself deserves examination.

Suggested outputs

- Exercise timeline
- Key decisions and assumptions
- Observed strengths
- Observed gaps
- Corrective actions with owners
- Items requiring configuration or training changes
- Items requiring policy or leadership decision
- Retest date or next exercise objective

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Before calling the team ready

Roles	Participants can explain their role, authority, escalation path, and handoff responsibility.
Current Reality	The team can maintain a concise shared operational picture.
Verification	Reported, Confirmed, Unknown, Needs Verification, and Conflicting Information are not blurred together.
Ownership	Open work has a named owner and next action.
Handoff	Incoming personnel can explain the situation without reconstructing it from scattered messages.
Access	Outside participants can be added securely with individual, role-appropriate access.
Communications	Primary and alternate paths have been tested rather than merely documented.
Degraded Operations	The team knows what to capture locally and how to reconcile when systems return.
Observe While You Act	Participants can recognize when assumptions no longer match changing reality.
Review	Lessons become assigned improvements and are retested.

Readiness is maintained, not achieved once

People change. Systems change. Plans change. Hazards change. Partner organizations change. Periodic practice keeps Resilience familiar enough to be useful when the operating environment is not.

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Operational boundary

This guide supports training and readiness. Client command authority, approved emergency plans, statutory responsibilities, applicable professional standards, and authorized systems remain controlling. Exercises should be adapted during implementation to the Client's environment.

Closing principle

Practice the continuity, not just the software.

The strongest exercise is one that leaves the team better able to preserve operational truth, ownership, communication, handoffs, and human judgment when conditions change.

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