

## RC3 Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise (TTX) Toolkit

### Key Highlights

NRECA's new RC3 Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise (TTX) Toolkit can benefit cooperatives by:

- Engaging staff who previously did not recognize cybersecurity as a relevant concern.
- Allowing staff to learn from real-world scenarios that reveal gaps and weaknesses that may exist in a cooperative's cyber defenses.
- Encouraging cross-departmental team-building to plan effective responses to cyber incidents.
- Enabling cooperatives, regardless of the level of in-house IT capabilities, to practice their incident response capabilities using relevant cybersecurity exercise scenarios.
- The Toolkit includes: cybersecurity scenarios, facilitator guides, checklists, participant worksheets, and after-action report templates. The RC3 team launched the Toolkit on cooperative.com in the Spring of 2019.
- ***Please note: The RC3 Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise Toolkit (TTX) scenarios can be conducted in a virtual environment through a coordinated web conference and do not require participants to assemble at the same location.***

### What is a Tabletop Exercise (TTX)?

A Tabletop Exercise (TTX) for cybersecurity provides a structured opportunity to test a cooperative's ability to assess and respond to a potentially damaging cyber incident. Each TTX is designed as a cross-functional team activity, with representatives of different departments of the cooperative working together on a solution, to raise cybersecurity awareness and preparedness and to emphasize that cybersecurity is everyone's responsibility – not just that of the Information Technology (IT) function. Additionally,

### What is the RC3 Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise Toolkit (TTX Toolkit)?

The RC3 Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise Toolkit (TTX Toolkit) is a set of documents that your cooperative can use to evaluate your current cybersecurity incident response capabilities and to help your cooperative enhance its cybersecurity preparedness. The TTX Toolkit provides hypothetical scenarios of cyber threats and incidents with real world implications relevant to cooperatives.



The following documents are available in the TTX Toolkit:

1. NRECA Tabletop Toolkit Resource List
2. Tabletop Checklist

3. TTX Delivery for Co-ops with various levels of cybersecurity resources
4. TTX Template - Invitation
5. Scenario Library
6. Participant Worksheets
7. After-action Report Templates
8. Facilitator Guides for each cyber-scenario

With the TTX Toolkit, co-ops have everything needed to run a ‘do-it-yourself’ team exercise and engage staff from many different departments in the co-op. A primary goal of this exercise is to bring representatives from departments throughout the cooperative together and to emphasize that everyone should be involved in cybersecurity, not just IT.

*Please note: The RC3 Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise Toolkit (TTX) scenarios can be conducted in a virtual environment through a coordinated web conference and do not require participants to assemble at the same location.*

## Who is the target audience for the RC3 TTX Toolkit?

The TTX Toolkit is designed for co-ops with varying levels of cybersecurity capabilities, specifically:

1. **Category #1:** Distribution co-ops with no IT staff that rely on third-party services for IT and security services.
2. **Category #2:** Distribution co-ops with at least one or more IT staff who have limited cybersecurity training.
3. **Category #3:** Distribution co-ops with IT staff that have more advanced cybersecurity training.

Even if your co-op does not have any IT staff, you can run this TTX and bring representatives from various departments together to emphasize that cybersecurity is everyone’s responsibility. If you are a Category #1 co-op, you might consider inviting your third-party IT provider/partner to participate in the exercise. You can work with your third-party provider/partner by phone or in-person, depending on what arrangement would work best for your cooperative.

## Which staff should participate in the RC3 TTX?

Since cybersecurity is everyone’s responsibility, NRECA recommends you involve staff from across your entire cooperative in this exercise, including your leadership team. Your cooperative can use the exercise to increase your co-op’s awareness of who is responsible for what tasks across the co-op, and to build a stronger cybersecurity culture within your co-op.

An important takeaway from NRECA RC3 Team’s visits with co-ops who participated in the beta test of the TTX Toolkit is that **leadership support is key to the success of organizational change and new initiatives**. After-action items resulting from the TTX will likely require commitment from leadership before they can be implemented. It is recommended that members of the leadership team, including CEOs and GMs, participate in the exercise.

## How long does it take to complete a TTX using the Toolkit?

The NRECA RC3 Team recommends that your co-op plan for at least two full hours to complete a facilitated Tabletop Exercise. The TTX Toolkit includes a checklist with actions to take before a facilitated Tabletop Exercise. Beginning about one month prior to the exercise, we recommend that you determine who will lead the planning and facilitation of the exercise, review exercise objectives, identify participants, schedule the exercise date and meeting room, and send a meeting invitation to all participants.

## How do you conduct a TTX with the Toolkit?

The planning checklist includes the minimum required activities for planning and developing an exercise. The point person in your co-op who oversees organizing the exercise should review the activities in the planning checklist at least one month before the desired exercise date. One of the key planning activities for an exercise is to assign roles, especially the role of Facilitator.

Before Conducting the Exercise, the Facilitator Should:

- Read all the exercise materials thoroughly.
- Adjust the scenario as needed to make it more realistic for your cooperative.
- Work with senior leadership to define the ideal goals and outcomes from the exercise.
- Identify who will be participating in the exercise and assign roles and responsibilities, including who will be responsible for capturing and documenting after-action items for follow-up.
- Set a date/time for the exercise, meeting space, and any logistics associated with snacks or food, if appropriate.
- Send a meeting invitation to all participants.

During the Exercise, the Facilitator Should:

- Be responsible for moderating and keeping participant discussions focused on exercise objectives.
- Use the questions and details provided in this *Facilitator's Guide* to explore relevant issues as thoroughly as possible within the scheduled event timeframe.
- Provide situation updates and additional information as needed.
- Resolve participant questions, as required.
- ***The Facilitator should not participate in the discussion but is responsible for presenting the questions for the group to discuss.***

After the Exercise the Facilitator Should:

- Ensure that after-action items are captured, appropriate staff are assigned responsibility, and assignments are documented for follow-up.
- Distribute the notes and after-action documents to participants and other senior leadership staff, as appropriate.

## Exercise Delivery Timeline

The facilitator should plan for *at least* a 2-hour exercise based on the following agenda outline:

- Facilitator starts the exercise by providing an overview of the exercise. The *TTX Delivery* slide deck includes slides to help the Facilitator deliver the overview:
  - Purpose (10 minutes)
  - Exercise Objectives (10 minutes)
  - Ground Rules (10 minutes)
- Facilitator begins TTX Scenario Play (1 hour)
- Facilitator conducts the TTX After Action/Lessons Learned discussion (30 minutes)

For complete instructions regarding the delivery of the exercise, please refer to the *TTX Checklist* documents provided as part of the TTX Toolkit.

**Note that timeframes listed are approximate.** Some elements may take more time depending on the complexity of the cooperative and the number of participants in the exercise. The Facilitator should adjust the above time schedule as needed.

### Who can access and use the RC3 Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise Toolkit?

While the toolkit is targeted to distribution cooperatives, all NRECA member cooperatives can access and use the TTX Toolkit.

### How much does the RC3 Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise Toolkit cost?

The RC3 Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise Toolkit is **FREE** for NRECA members.

### How do I get a copy of the RC3 Cybersecurity Tabletop Exercise Toolkit?

You can download the TTX Toolkit from cooperative.com via NRECA's [RC3 Program website page](#).

### Whom should I contact if I have questions?

If you have any questions about the RC3 TTX Toolkit, please contact:

- Adaora Ifebigh, Senior Manager, R&D Engagements: [Adaora.Ifebigh@nreca.coop](mailto:Adaora.Ifebigh@nreca.coop)
- RC3 Team: [CybersecurityRC3@nreca.coop](mailto:CybersecurityRC3@nreca.coop)

If you are interested in learning more about the RC3 Program, please see the RC3 webpage on cooperative.com at: <https://www.cooperative.com/programs-services/bts/rc3/Pages/default.aspx>.

### How do I stay informed of updates to the RC3 TTX Toolkit and other cybersecurity resources available from NRECA?

We encourage you and your colleagues and staff to sign-up for our twice-monthly newsletter, *Business and Technology Update*. A simple sign-up form is available at: <https://www.cooperative.com/programs-services/bts/Pages/Technology-Update.aspx>. Also, visit [www.cooperative.com](http://www.cooperative.com) to find more resources about cybersecurity and a wide variety of other topics affecting cooperatives today.

The RC3 Program is funded as a collaborative partnership between NRECA and the U.S. Department of Energy.

This material is based upon work supported by the Department of Energy National Technology Laboratory under Award Number(s) DE-OE0000807.

This document was prepared as an account of work sponsored by an agency of the United States Government. Neither the United States Government nor any agency thereof, nor any of their employees, makes any warranty, express or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of any information, apparatus, product, or process disclosed, or represents that its use would not infringe privately owned rights. Reference herein to any specific commercial product, process, or service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer, or otherwise does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the United States Government or any agency thereof. The views and opinions of authors expressed herein do not necessarily state or reflect those of the United States Government or any agency thereof.