

Our Reference      North East and North Cumbria ICB\  
FOI ICB 25-062

**North East and North Cumbria ICB**  
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By Email

16 June 2025

Dear Applicant

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information – NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB)**

Thank you for your request received on 24 May 2025 for information held by NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (the ICB) under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The ICB covers the areas of County Durham, Newcastle Gateshead, North Cumbria, North Tyneside, Northumberland, South Tyneside, Sunderland, and Tees Valley.

Please find the information you requested on behalf of the ICB as follows.

**Your Request**

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and in accordance with the Environmental Information Regulations, I am writing to request the following information:

1. How many multi-agency exercises have been conducted by your organisation within the last 3 years (1st May 2022 to 30th April 2025 inclusive).
2. What proportion of these multi-agency exercises were:
  - a. Tabletop / Scenario Based
  - b. Live Exercises
  - c. Other (please state).
3. Please detail how post-exercise findings are fed back into the organisation and how any changes to policies and procedures are implemented as a result of this feedback.
4. What proportion of multi-agency exercises in the last 3 years:
  - a. Involved more than two CCA 2004 category one responder organisations (please detail)
  - b. Involved CCA 2004 category two responders (please detail)
  - c. Involved organisations from the voluntary and faith-based sectors (please detail).

5. Please detail how the aims and objectives of the exercise are determined and communicated to the parties involved.

## **Our Response**

We can confirm, as per Section 1(1) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the ICB does hold the information requested.

1. North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board have led 3 multi-agency exercises in the past 3 years – one per year.
2. The three exercises were Tabletop/Scenario Based to ensure maximum learning for staff and all agencies present. Each of the exercises though had "live" elements to ensure dynamic learning.
3. These exercises have been designed to offer an opportunity to confirm and challenge emergency preparedness, resilience and response (EPRR) and incident response arrangements (policies and plans as well as command and control arrangements), providing assurance of their effectiveness; opportunities for improvement in arrangements and any gaps that need to be rectified urgently. All plans are tested during these exercises with staff having the opportunity to practice their skills and increase their confidence, knowledge and skill base in preparation for responding during any 'real' incident (in line with a training needs analysis to ensure staff are competent in their role).

Following completion of each exercise, a hot debrief is undertaken which enables the ICB to capture any immediate learning and to provide an opportunity for participating staff to immediately feedback what went well, what didn't go so well and to identify lessons learned.

Within four weeks of an exercise, a formal cold debrief with those involved is held with the results forming a lessons identified report which will include an action plan for implementation of lessons identified as well as policies and procedures changed/amended to reflect this learning.

4. Each of these three exercises have involved a range of category 1 (Ambulance Fire, Police and Local Authority) and category 2 responders (utility and transport companies) as well as wider stakeholders from across the Integrated care system including organisations and responders from the voluntary and faith sectors such as the British Red Cross.
5. A multi-agency planning group led by the ICB and made up of representatives from each of the 4 Local Resilience Forums plan the event and establish the aim and objectives of the exercise.

This planning group is also responsible for developing the exercise in detail, coordinating activities and producing the exercise Instructions and scenarios/injects.

These aims and objectives are then shared with all participating agencies prior to the exercise taking place in order that all parties are clear on the expected outcomes.

In accordance with the Information Commissioner's directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log. Therefore, a version of our response which will protect your anonymity will be posted on the NHS ICB website <https://northeastnorthcumbria.nhs.uk/>.

If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above telephone number or at the above address.

If you are unhappy with the service you have received in relation to your request and wish to request a review of our decision, you should write to the Senior Governance Manager using the contact details at the top of this letter quoting the appropriate reference number.

If you are not content with the outcome your review, you do have the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner as established by section 50 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Generally, the Information Commissioner cannot make a decision unless you have exhausted the ICB's complaints procedure.

The Information Commissioner can be contacted at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF or [www.ico.org.uk](http://www.ico.org.uk).

Any information we provide following your request under the Freedom of Information Act will not confer an automatic right for you to re-use that information, for example to publish it. If you wish to re-use the information that we provide and you do not specify this in your initial application for information then you must make a further request for its re-use as per the Re-Use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015 [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk). This will not affect your initial information request.

Yours faithfully

*Information Governance Support Officer*

**Information Governance Support Officer  
North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board**