

LÜKEX – A brief introduction

LÜKEX (Interministerial and Interstate Crisis Management Exercise) is the acronym for a national campaign of national cross-border strategic exercises in the field of crisis management. Since 2004, national crisis management strategies in Germany have been evaluated and optimized on a regular basis. LÜKEX aids both the Federal Government and the Federal States to prepare for (exceptional) crises and threats and provides them with an opportunity to test existing crisis management plans and mechanisms. Within the German civil protection system, LÜKEX thus makes an important contribution to national crisis prevention.

What is the purpose of LÜKEX?

LÜKEX exercises are so-called strategic crisis management exercises involving the highest crisis committees and crisis management structures at Federal Government and state level, including critical infrastructures of the private sector. The objective is to improve the interaction between the stakeholders involved and thus their ability to respond to exceptional crisis situations. Furthermore, LÜKEX stimulates a culture of close cooperation and decision-making within crisis management organisations: Since relevant players at different levels of government and from different departments cooperate closely in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of LÜKEX, the exercises produce networks from which participants may benefit in case of a real crisis in the future. Ideally, this will lead to a culture of close cooperation which will also be beneficial to overcoming crises beyond the scope of the exercises.

Additionally, the exercises assist in determining the need for action in areas where there are no established procedures for collaboration or consultation channels in place or where these still need to be improved.

As a superior federal authority, the Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance (BBK) reports to the Federal Ministry of the Interior and is responsible for civil security preparedness and in particular for civil protection and disaster assistance. The BBK as the federal shared services centre offers a whole range of services to authorities at all levels of government and to organizations and institutions involved in the field of civil protection.

The BBK incorporates on the basis of an interdisciplinary approach all areas related to the safeguarding of civil security, integrating them into an effective protection system for the population. The Federal Office is a reliable and competent partner providing assistance regarding emergency preparedness and self-protection of the public.

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Federal Office
of Civil Protection and
Disaster Assistance

LÜKEX

Interministerial and Interstate Crisis Management Exercise



BBK. Working together. Living in safety.

Who is involved in the LÜKEX exercises?

Crisis management can only be successful and sustainable if public and private players work together and co-operate in a single network. It must be founded on a professional co-operation process between the Federal Government, the Federal States, the economy, science and other cooperation partners. For this reason, it is not only government agencies but also critical infrastructure operators (KRITIS) as well as organisations, associations and academic institutions that are involved in LÜKEX exercises. The LÜKEX exercises are carried out under the leadership of the Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI). A project team spanning all government agencies (on an inter-ministerial and interstate basis) is established and based in the Federal Office of Civil Protection (BBK) and Disaster Assistance for each exercise campaign in order to deal with the planning, preparation, implementation and evaluation of the exercise and in order to draft an after-action report.

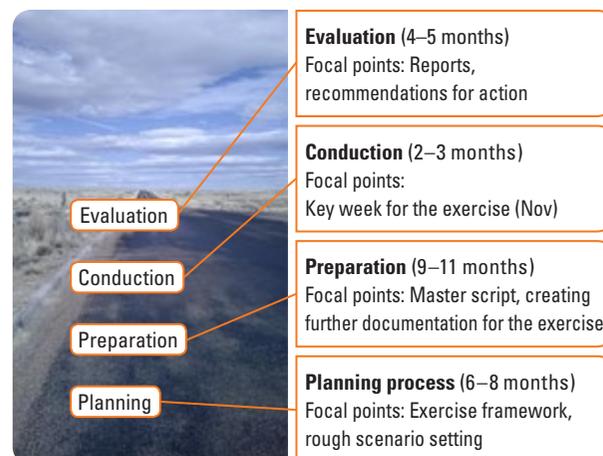


The objective of the LÜKEX exercises is to optimise crisis management. Source: BBK

What does LÜKEX entail?

Each LÜKEX campaign takes approximately two years to be completed. It is subdivided into the following four phases: planning process, preparation, conduction and evaluation. The preparation phase, which can take up to twelve months, is regarded to be the core of the LÜKEX process.

In several joint working sessions, seminars and workshops, the scenario is developed and expert opinions on special technical issues are obtained. This allows participants to acquire important insights and knowledge early on, which can help improve crisis management in a specific subject area even before the crisis management exercise takes place. Based on these findings and in the framework of a discursive process, a master script is compiled which forms the basis for the exercise control. The conduction of the exercise is the climax of each campaign and at the same time the “litmus test” for the success of a trusting cooperation between all participants in the planning process and preparation phase of the exercise. The crisis committees of the Federal Government and of the Federal States involved are at the centre of the exercise events.



The path is the goal the four phases of a LÜKEX cycle. Graphic: BBK. Photo: BBK/H. Burkow

LÜKEX campaigns are evaluated in a carefully compiled after-action report which contains the insights and knowledge gained and the recommendations for action that have been derived from the exercise. It forms the basis for further improvements to the strategic crisis management structures.

What has LÜKEX achieved?

After more than ten years, LÜKEX is now an established brand and regarded to be an example for strategic crisis management exercises in Germany and abroad. It has been shown that the exercise series is excellently suited to develop a culture of cooperation and decision-making in strategic crisis management and to complement existing crisis planning and decision-making structures. In addition, LÜKEX has provided fresh impetus to other areas of strategic crisis management, such as the further development of interdepartmental management structures, by providing them with a common platform that spans across different departments and areas of responsibility.



The topics of the LÜKEX exercises reflect the risks relevant in today’s world. Source: BBK

Today, LÜKEX stands for the launch of a transparent future-orientated process which has triggered important developments in civil protection in Germany and continues to drive them in an innovative manner.