

Burke County Water Rescue Full-Scale Exercise

Dates: October 8–10 2026

Location: WPCC Training Center & Bridgewater Area

Primary Site: WPCC Training Center, 500 Vinearden Rd, Morganton, NC 28655

Exercise Overview

The Burke County Water Rescue Full-Scale Exercise is a multi-discipline, operationally focused training event designed to enhance interagency coordination, technical rescue capabilities, and incident management effectiveness in water-based emergency environments. This exercise will integrate personnel and resources across multiple specialties to simulate realistic response conditions involving swift water, surface water, and subsurface operations.

Course Hours: 48 Hours

Exercise Objectives

1. Operational Coordination & Incident Management

- Evaluate the ability of participating agencies to establish and operate within an Incident Command System (ICS) structure.
- Assess Incident Management Team (IMT) functionality, including task book completion opportunities on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Measure effectiveness of unified command, resource tracking, and operational planning.

2. Water Rescue Capabilities

- Demonstrate proficiency in **swift water rescue operations**, including victim location, stabilization, and recovery.
- Conduct **surface water rescue scenarios** utilizing coordinated rescue swimmer and shore-based techniques.
- Evaluate **boat operations** in both calm and swift water environments, including navigation, victim retrieval, and crew coordination.

3. Technical Water Search Operations

- Assess the deployment and effectiveness of **ROV (Remotely Operated Vehicle)** and **sonar systems** in underwater search scenarios.

- Measure coordination between sonar operators, boat teams, and command staff for targeted search and recovery missions.

4. K9 Water Operations

- Evaluate K9 team integration into water and boat operations.
- Assess effectiveness of K9 units in search operations and handler coordination within multi-agency environments.

5. Communications & Information Technology

- Test interoperability of communications systems across agencies.
- Evaluate reliability of radio communications, data sharing, and IT support under operational conditions.
- Identify gaps in communication coverage and coordination.

6. Night Operations

- Assess operational readiness and safety during low-light conditions.
- Evaluate team adaptability, communication, and coordination during nighttime water rescue scenarios.

Exercise Schedule

October 8 (Thursday) – Setup & Early Registration

- 18:00 – Arrival, setup, and registration at WPCC Training Center
- *No operational activities will occur on this date*

October 9 (Friday) – Full Operations

- 07:00 – Morning registration
- 08:00 – Operational period begins
- Boat operations expected at Bridgewater (pending water flow conditions)
- Night operations (optional, based on participation)
 - Concludes no later than 22:00

October 10 (Saturday) – Continued Operations & Demobilization

- Operational periods continue
- Exercise concludes no later than 18:00

Participant Requirements

- **Registration:**
 - All participants must register through NC TERMS prior to the event.
 - Additional registration for WPCC will be completed upon arrival.
 - Each Team Leader/Supervisor or individual participant must complete the attached Google Form.
- **Logistics:**
 - Camping is available at the training grounds.
 - Participants must be **self-sufficient for food and supplies.** (working on food options)
 - Water will be provided

Safety & Control

- All operations will follow established safety protocols and ICS structure.
- A Safety Officer will be assigned to monitor all operational periods.
- Participation in night operations will be contingent on adequate staffing and safety oversight.

Point of Contact

For questions or additional information:

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Google Form URL

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScwbErHtNF4GRFu7C2rY15SqDcs1hEqTn5xKmzbJXqddvDeXQ/viewform?usp=header>

