

# Lessons Learned for Personnel Accountability Drills

**MAY 21, 2018**

This month, Ames Laboratory conducted two personnel accountability drills as part of the Department of Energy's annual Eagle Horizon continuity drill. The Lab was able to account for 79 percent of its employees, affiliates, and contractors in the first drill and 100 percent in the second drill.

In the event of an emergency, personnel accountability is performed to enable expedient and efficient search and rescue efforts and to establish the whereabouts of mission critical personnel for the continued operation of essential Lab functions. Lessons learned from last week's drills will improve the Lab's ability to conduct personnel accountability and better safeguard staff.

During the drill, personnel received an email asking them to respond with their location. Supervisors were asked to account for employees on work travel, sick leave, or vacation. Later in the exercise, designated Laboratory staff walked the buildings asking others if they had responded to the email or followed up by phone. Below is listed what was learned from the exercise:

- Because the email was from Human Resources instead of a personal account, several staff thought the email was a phishing attempt and did not want open the link. In the future, an announcement will be made over the PA system and an email will be sent from the COO notifying employees to complete the prompt as soon as possible.
- Some supervisors were out so they could not account for employees that don't access emails frequently during the work day
- The message to account for employees did not reach several supervisors who are listed as ISU employees but supervise Ames Lab staff, and therefore were unable to respond
- Because the notification said the exercise will take place over 48 hours, some did not feel the need to answer quickly
- Other laboratories used multiple means of notification (i.e., work email, work and personal text, personal and office phone) that Ames Laboratory should evaluate for consideration

We will continue to refine the process for this type of exercise whether it's performed in a true emergency or as part of a drill. In either case it is important to respond as quickly as possible. Also, as a supervisor, if you are aware of one of your staff that's not at their desk or has no access to email because of work assignment, travel, vacation or sick leave, please respond on their behalf if you know they are safe and accounted for.

Finally, the first two drills were sent to individuals that were listed with an Ames Laboratory home department. In an emergency we are interested in all individuals associated with Ames Laboratory. Future changes and improvements will look for ways to include everyone in the accountability process.