Toolbox Talk - Recovery Readiness

Todd Jerome Jenkins | v2.0 | October 13, 2026 | 5–10 minutes plus field checks

What and why

Recovery readiness prepares the safe response, decision support and restart evidence for a credible work interruption. A missing resource or blocked planned access can leave a crew between normal work and an unfamiliar alternative. Prepare for that interruption before it happens.

Objective: Rehearse one plausible interruption and identify the safe response, decision owner and evidence needed for restart.

When and where

Before nonroutine work, at changed conditions and when a planned support arrangement may become unavailable. In an announced tabletop exercise and the approved task planning process.

How to use it

- Choose a plausible interruption. Identify the approved safe response and who maintains required restrictions.
- Confirm the decision owner, backup and needed resources. Alternatives require appropriate review and authorization.
- Communicate status and restart prerequisites. Emergencies require the emergency plan without delay for this discussion.

Verify It in the Field

Use a paper scenario where the designated reviewer is unavailable. Identify the hold and authorized replacement route.

Confirm real contacts and resource availability through approved normal channels. Do not stage failures or send false emergency reports.

Verify restart prerequisites and affected controls with the prescribed method. Record actual results and required release; a tabletop is only practice.

Failure points and stop triggers

Unavailable backup; unclear hold condition; improvised alternatives; unfamiliar duties; lost restrictions during handoff; restarting because the disruption appears over. Hold affected work when the response is unclear, necessary support is absent or the proposed alternative exceeds authority or approved limits. Escalate, maintain the prescribed safe condition and rebrief after authorized changes.

Toolbox talk questions

1. What interruption could defeat today’s arrangement?

2. Who keeps the work safe while decisions are made?

3. What evidence is needed before restart?

Use the separate supervisor field check and attendance sheet. Practice is not qualification or work authorization.

Source: DOE-HDBK-1028-2009, Vol. 1, printed pp. 5-16–5-18. References and task-specific limits on the webpage.

Next step: Apply this skill to one step on the free JHA/JSA field-verification worksheet.

Expanded guidance and separate forms: toddjeromejenkins.com/toolbox-talks/work-disruption-recovery-readiness

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