



EMERGENCY PLANNING AND RESPONSE

Preparing to respond appropriately to major accident situations.

While the aim of safety management is to prevent accidents and incidents, there are a few occasions when the safeguards in place are overwhelmed by the scale or speed of the development of a major accident.

An effective emergency plan is the last line of defence during a major accident. The evidence from many sources is that most organisations without a well-structured emergency response plan may never recover from a major accident. Preparing for major accidents does not only ensure the safety and health of employees and the public during the accident, but also indicates how the business will recover after the accident and return to normal as quickly as possible.

The on-site emergency plan typically establishes procedures for dealing with emergency situations involving loss of containment of hazardous material (credible scenarios). The offsite emergency plan gives details of the personnel responsible for particular activities in support of emergency actions. The emergency plans should be simple and straightforward, and set up according to a defined layout to prevent confusion, and they need to be flexible and achieve necessary compliance with legislative requirements.

Effective emergency response plans are based on the identified risks, they are understood by all, and they are rehearsed and improved by feedback from drills.

Bureau Veritas supports national and international guidelines in its delivery of emergency plan consultancy, and gains the involvement of front-line operations personnel to ensure the usability of the plans.

Bureau Veritas also assists in testing the plans in simulated “table top” emergency exercises. These exercises train site personnel in procedures, ensuring good interfacing with external emergency services, and checking the coverage and relevance of the plan itself.

Bureau Veritas also assists with emergency equipment survivability, emergency control facility audits, fire and explosion consequence analysis and fire-fighting system audits as part of the emergency planning and response.

Key benefits

A well thought out and tested emergency response plan ensures adequate preparation for the most serious hazard situations. While some disruption is inevitable, a tested emergency response plan means that:

- The consequences of the situation can be minimised and the opportunity for rapid recovery is maximised;
- All workers, including managers and supervisors, know their roles and responsibilities, and are trained to respond appropriately;
- Internal and external resources and capabilities are identified;
- Mutual aid agreements with other organisations are effective;
- Emergency response times can be reduced; and
- Business operations can be restored as quickly as possible.

Related services

- Risk assessments

