



Incident Command System Awareness

Facilitator Guide

Acknowledgments

The Midwest Consortium developed this course for Hazardous Waste Workers and Emergency Responders under cooperative agreement number U45 ES 06184 from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. MWC personnel now at Emergency Response Solutions International coordinated the development effort. The Midwest Consortium gratefully acknowledges the support from Ford Motor Company, which enabled them to develop the concept for the program.

We encourage you to comment on these materials. Please give your suggestions to your Program Director.

Warning

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The material was prepared for use by facilitators experienced in the training of persons who are or who anticipate responding to emergencies. Authors of this material have prepared it for the training of this category of workers as of the date specified on the title page. Users are cautioned that the subject is constantly evolving. Therefore, the material may require additions, deletions, or modifications to incorporate the effects of that evolution occurring after the date of this material preparation.

These materials were updated on April 25, 2024 and all web links were active as of that date; if any errors are found please notify your Program Director.

Disclaimer

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) rule to help ensure worker health and safety during emergency response activities requires specific training for members of the response team, depending upon the duties to be performed. Emergency response activities are conducted within a structured framework called the Incident Command System and an Emergency Response Plan (ERP); at locations where personnel will evacuate and await external personnel to conduct the response an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) is required.

This is an Awareness level program and does not meet the requirements for serving as an Incident Commander at an actual incident. To serve as an Incident Commander, additional training is required, including an initial 24-hours of training at the Operations level.

For further information about the training requirements for workers under each of these Plans, consult the training facilitator and/or your company ERP or EAP and your health and safety representative.

Other Programs

This training program is one in a series related to managing emergencies based on training requirements established by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, as described in 29 CFR 1910.120(q).

Programs are available for community members, municipal employees and industrial workers who may discover a hazardous material (awareness), prevent the spread of a spill (operations), or control the release of a hazardous material (technician) or participate in an evacuation.

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Overview

Background

This course was developed as an introduction to several aspects of the OSHA Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response (HAZWOPER, 29 CFR 1910.120) and Emergency Action Plans (EAP, 29 CFR 1910.38) standards. The focus of the program is the need for planning and a structure for an organized effort at a response or evacuation. When a response is to be conducted under HAZWOPER, the Incident Command System is activated and overseen by the Incident Commander. In an evacuation as described in 29 CFR 1910.38, a similar process is used, often overseen by the Evacuation Coordinator. This program covers the functions of various participants in these organized structures. The curriculum consists of material presentations and discussions, small group activities and facilitated reviews.

This course is designed to allow the participants to complete the program in four hours, excluding breaks. Although the amount of time spent on each section is flexible, please note that material in earlier sections may be needed for successful completion of later program activities. The activities were designed to ensure that participants acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to better understand the Incident Command System. For this reason, the participants should complete all activities. It is the desire of the Midwest Consortium for Hazardous Waste Worker Training to allow professional instructional freedom yet maintain consistency of training. Therefore, the course outlines must be carefully prepared, so all training objectives are met. Suggestions for handling the introductory and closing portions of the program are provided.

Only one facilitator is necessary for delivering this course. To maximize learning, limit the class size to no more than 25 participants. See the Minimum Criteria (https://tools.niehs.nih.gov/wetp/public/hasl_get_blob.cfm?ID=11266&file_name=WTP_Minimum_Criteria_062818_Final_508.pdf).

Facilitator Preparation

The ICS Awareness course incorporates a variety of teaching methods to meet varied learning styles. Material presentation with discussion, and small group activities are used. This Facilitator Guide corresponds to the Participant Guide and will give you a guideline for presenting the material as it includes the following types of information: objectives of the course, directions for presentation, activity directions and answers, and issues that might be raised by the class.

As a facilitator, you should carefully review this Facilitator Guide and the content of the Participant Guide. In addition, you should be familiar with the OSHA HAZWOPER standard, 29 CFR 1910.120(q), required elements of an Emergency Response Plan, and the OSHA EAP standard, 29 CFR 1910.38.

Preparation of a local example of an emergency response that could have been done more effectively may be useful. Alternatively, it may be useful to identify a worst-case possible emergency that could occur in the area (e.g., highway transportation event, large unintentional release at a storage facility).

Test all web links prior to the session and if any are inoperative please notify your Program Director.

Ensure that you know the requirements for ‘successful completion’ for the program, and any relevant remediation steps you may take if successful completion is not achieved.

Resource Materials

The resources listed below may be helpful when preparing to teach this course:

Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response, (29 CFR 1910.120),
Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA)

Emergency Action Plans, (<https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.38>)

OSHA e-tool for EAP elements and guidance on content here:
<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/evacuation/checklists/eap.html>.

Employee Alarm Systems, (<https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.165>)

Fire Brigades ([29 CFR 1910.156](https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.156))

Permit-Required Confined Spaces (<https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/regulations/standardnumber/1910/1910.146>)

OSHA Evacuation and Shelter in Place, https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/emergencypreparedness/gettingstarted_evacuation.htm; OSHA factsheet on high-rise building evacuations, https://www.osha.gov/OshDoc/data_General_Facts/evacuating-highrise-factsheet.pdf

[Principal Emergency Response and Preparedness Requirements in OSHA Standards and Guidance for Safety and Health Problems](#) (note date)

National Safety Council, <https://www.nsc.org/>

2017 National Incident Management System, <https://training.fema.gov/nims/>

MWC Evacuation Coordinator training program, <https://mwc.umn.edu/>

MWC Training only Emergency Response Plan, <https://mwc.umn.edu>

Relevant Consensus standards (based on reconnaissance) from the [National Fire Protection Association \(NFPA\)](#) and [American National Standards Institute \(ANSI\)](#)

Presentation of Material

Graphics and audiovisuals

Graphics are available and should be used to assist with in-class instruction. Graphics appear in the Participant Guide. Refer to these illustrations when you cover the material.

Photos, charts, slides, posters, short videos and Power Point slides are also useful training tools and may be introduced in the lesson where appropriate. Power Point slides should be limited to those that support lesson presentation. Avoid using one-word slides, slides with term definitions, and slides as lecture outlines. These types of slides are not effective for keeping participants' attention. Effective slides contain questions, color graphics and short lists.

If you are delivering this program at a specific facility, you should consider creating graphics that depict potential emergency scenarios for that location. This may include photos, slides or overheads that depict emergency exits, maps, designated assembly areas, or in-place shelters.

Activities

Individual and small group activities are incorporated throughout the ICS Awareness course. The purpose of the activities is to involve participants in clarifying information, identifying options, and applying the skills they learn. Allow enough time for participants to complete each activity and discuss them afterwards. These facilitator pages will include steps to run the activities and the activity answers.

Because class activities enhance the learning process, it is important to make discussions comfortable so that everyone can participate. Assume that every class will have participants with a wide range of communication skills. Some participants will have no problem in participating in group discussion, while others may have a hard time in front of the group.

Suggestions for handling group activities and discussions include the following:

- Allow participants to express their values, attitudes, and opinions freely
- Do not judge participants' responses
- Facilitate discussion by paraphrasing and clarifying. It is seldom appropriate for the facilitator to give opinions.
- Avoid putting people on the spot. Instead of asking individuals for answers, have a voluntary group spokesperson present answers to the class.
- Keep the groups focused on the task at hand. Because small-group activities can draw heavily on the participants' personal experience, sometimes one person can dominate the group and run away with the discussion. If you see this happening, steer the discussion back on track by asking another group for reactions.
- Keep the participants alert and interested by encouraging participation. If the groups are not participating or are giving only cursory answers, ask them for more information or background to elicit answers that are more specific.

Suggested Agenda

Introduction	30 minutes
Activity 1	30 minutes
Incident Command System	60 minutes
Activity 2	30 minutes
Activity 3	30 minutes
Activity 4	30 minutes
Review	10 minutes
Closing/Evaluation	20 minutes

Note: does not include a 15-minute, non-training time break

Note: File the agenda, lesson plan and any supporting documents (ex: local example used) in the program file

Introduction

Time requirement: 30 Minutes

Number of facilitators: 1 or more, consistent with ratio shown in the Minimum Criteria

Materials

- Whiteboard or equivalent; markers
- Sign-in sheets
- Registration Materials (if not collected prior to the course)
- Participant Guides
- Other course resource materials
- Handouts

Objectives

- Recognize the need for planning in advance of a potential emergency
- Identify the response capabilities at your facility
- Distinguish between Emergency Response Plan and Emergency Action Plan
- Identify response needs and training provided

Teaching Methods

The Introduction involves presentation and discussion, including an emergency that has occurred and the importance of having established response procedures. During this introductory session, it is important to provide examples to show that emergencies are costly and are best handled if there has been adequate planning, including plans to use the Incident Command System to facilitate communication, problem solving during the response, termination and meaningful follow up to improve the system should another event occur.

Suggested Facilitator Preparation

- Review the Participant Guide
- Prepare a lesson plan

Minimum Content Requirements

- Define Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), Emergency Response Plan (ERP), and Emergency Action Plan (EAP), and “emergency” according to OSHA
- Complete the activity

Questions You May Be Asked

1. We want to work better with the Fire Department. Will this program help?

Yes. This will help you identify how in-plant personnel can effectively work and communicate with municipal emergency responders. The responders will use the language and structure covered in this program.

2. What if we just call 911?

You still need a plan! This program provides guidance on the requirements for evacuation plans and response plans, the skills needed on-site to build your capacity to communicate with responders about your plan and needs before an emergency, and to communicate if responders are called to your plant.

3. I have not heard about 29 CFR 1910.120 or 29 CFR 1910.38—what are these and where can I find them?

Be prepared to give a short intro to reading the CFR. Bookmarks to electronic versions and/or the print version of 29 CFR 1910 may be useful for illustration. See also the table in many of the longer programs, copied but applied to ICS here:

Section 29 CFR 1910.120 refers to where the standard is found in federal regulations. This number refers to the standardized system the Federal government uses to index all its regulations. The system is like library cataloging or barcoding auto parts so they can be located more easily.

Requirements for Emergency Response Workers

29		CFR 1910.120
29	=	OSHA regulations are in Part 29 .
CFR	=	<i>Code of Federal Regulations</i> is the title of the government publication.
1910	=	Part number 1910 covers General Industry.
.120	=	Section number 120 covers hazardous waste operations and emergency response. emergency response.

There may be more letters and numbers after the section which identifies the exact paragraph. A more complete reference for emergency response training is (q)(6). The specific requirements for training of industrial emergency responders at the operations level are found in (q)(3)(i) addresses the Incident Command System.

Presentation of the Session

Welcome the class

- Participants can be welcomed by an employer, union representative, or similar person in support of the program
- Ask participants to sign in
- Explain why the program was created, and reference HAZWOPER

Introduce the program and presenters

- The training institution conducting the training
- The Midwest Consortium
- The Facilitator(s) who are present

Introduce the participants

- Ask the participants to introduce themselves to the class. Have them tell their name, experience with hazardous materials, where they are from, why they are taking the class, and how they will use their Incident Command awareness training.
- Optional: With small classes, or if there is extra time, also ask the participants to tell what health and safety concerns they have identified. Responses should be listed where all can see. Highlight each of these concerns during the discussion of the agenda.

Describe the session activities

- Go through the agenda
- Explain the objectives
- Describe 'successful completion'
- Show any reference materials
- Explain the Training Center policies (e.g., breaks, emergency alerting, etc.)
- Explain why evaluation is part of training, as part of continuous improvement

Introduction

- Discuss an event that resulted in an emergency. If participants have not experienced such an event, the facilitator can refer to the example in the Participant Guide introduction.
- Review the OSHA definition of "emergency" in the Participant Guide.
- Ask participants to describe an SOP that is in place at their worksite. Record the topic where everyone can view the list. Summarize by showing the definition in the Participant Guide.
- Ask: How many of you currently have an Emergency Response Plan (ERP) or Emergency Action Plan (EAP)?

Activity 1

Complete Activity 1 in small groups. Introduce the report back process during which the following will be listed:

- Potential emergencies
- Need for training
- Other needed information

Depending on the potential emergencies identified by participants, some OSHA resources may be useful, including:

<https://www.osha.gov/emergency-preparedness>

<https://www.osha.gov/etools/evacuation-plans-procedures>

Incident Command System

Time requirement: 60 Minutes

Number of facilitators: 1 or more, consistent with ratio shown in the Minimum Criteria

Materials

- Whiteboard or equivalent; markers
- Participant Guides
- Handouts
- Pencils and notepaper

Objectives

- List reasons for an organized structure
- Identify required content of plans
- Identify the functions of the personnel designated in the structure
- Match function of personnel with required training
- Assess preparedness
- Identify the functions of management personnel during an emergency response

Teaching Methods

Discussion and presentation. The overall structure is required for adequate planning, response activities, and useful critique and follow up. The activities allow time to discuss the various types of roles that must be included, to emphasize that all levels of employees (first-on-the scene to management) are involved, and that Incident Commanders play a critical role in ensuring that all employees are protected when an emergency occurs. In an EAP, the IC may be called something different, such as the Coordinator or Lead; flexibility is allowed in 29 CFR 1910.38.

Suggested Facilitator Preparation

- Review the Participant Guide
- Review this section

Minimum Content Requirements

- Complete the activities
- Review the various structures and duties
- Review topics associated with ERP and EAP

Questions You May Be Asked

1. The corporate officers have determined we will evacuate and not respond. Do we need to have any training?

Yes. In order to recognize a situation that requires evacuation and evacuate safely, you must be trained. See 29 CFR 1910.38(e)

2. The Fire Department comes through once every two years. Isn't that enough?

Consider the factors such as the rate of personnel changes at the plant and the Fire Department, process changes at the plant and corporate changes in determining how often the Fire Department should walk through the facility. Facilitate a discussion about other factors that should be considered. (e.g., insurance rates...).

3. We do not have enough people to cover all these duties. What can we do?

Often at smaller facilities, a person will assume multiple roles. However, it is necessary that one person be in charge (IC) and that everyone knows his/her roles before the emergency and has appropriate training.

4. Everything we do is managed by corporate. How does this apply to us?

Ask: has there been local review and input to the planning done by corporate? Some likely local tweaks are in the contact list, for example.

5. We evacuate immediately when directed by the plant manager or shift supervisor (nights and weekends). I am sure she has not been trained as a Commander.

For an EAP, roles (ICS designated titles in NIMS) and responsibilities (functions in NIMS) must be clearly described. Terminology for roles must be understood locally but is not standardized as in the ERP. Training must be adequate to ensure that the responsibilities can be carried out safely, but there is no requirement that the person who oversees an evacuation is trained at the IC level described for emergency responders.

It may be useful to have several participants look up the requirements of the EAP and another group look up requirements of the ERP. An IC is cited in 29 CFR 1910.120, but not in 29 CFR 1910.138. Specific training by responsibility is cited in 29 CFR 1910.120, but training must be adequate for the assigned responsibilities in 29 CFR 1910.38.

Presentation of the Session

Ask: Why is structure needed for a safe response? (You may find the analogy to a military operation useful). Stress that structure is needed for response or evacuation.

Identify if everyone is employed where there will be a response or if there are some participants who will evacuate; you may want to make two groups, as appropriate.

Response

Review what must be included in an Emergency Response Plan. This can be done by asking “what topics should be in the plan?” Record responses where all can see. Compare with the list in the Participant Guide.

Refer to the diagram for ICS. See especially: Command Staff, General Staff, use of Officer vs Section Chief

Ask: How does this differ from the structure at your plant?

Ask participants to read the functions for other personnel in the ERP, as shown. Facilitate a discussion of how various companies modify the structure to fit available personnel.

Review the duties of each job function.

Evacuation

Review what must be included in an Emergency Action Plan. This can be done by asking “what topics should be in the plan?” Record responses where all can see. Compare with the list in the Participant Guide.

Refer to the diagram for the Evacuation Team structure

Ask: How many of you have an EAP that includes this type of structure?

Underscore that the terminology shown in the figure is not required but is an illustration of how the roles may be described. The overriding goal is for there to be a structure.

Ask participants to read the duties for roles in the EAP, as shown. Facilitate a discussion of how various companies modify the structure to fit available personnel.

Unified Command

Review the content found in the Participant Guide.

Training

Review the knowledge and competencies listed for responders at various levels.

Review the training requirements for those involved in evacuation.

Review other training that may be needed for responders and evacuation personnel.

Activity 2

Training is essential for an adequate response. The required elements and roles at each training level are presented using an Activity.

Refer participants to Activity 2. Have them work in small groups, as time allows determining the correct response; compare results during a report back. Alternatively, groups could work on several of the scenarios, and the results could be shared during report back.

Answers

1. Operations level - not at the point of the release. Stopping release at a distance
2. Awareness level - at a distance, gathering information
3. Awareness - Incident commander—implementing the ERP
4. Technician - stopping a release at the source
5. Specialist - specialized skills usually needed for chlorine response
6. Incident Commander - overall, in charge
7. Operations at a minimum, since Technician level (using Level A) will be responding
8. Public Information Officer
9. Operations, Planning and others designated by the IC including the highest level of responder (Operations/Technician)
10. None specified - Finance and Planning works with others as appropriate
11. None specified - management and/or other personnel will require decision criteria
12. Specific for any identified possible rescue - First Aid certification training
13. None specified - consistent with the duties and assessment of potential risks to these personnel
14. Awareness – Alert appropriate personnel

It is suggested that those who will use an EAP discuss the types of training that should be provided for each role. This will depend on a hazard assessment. Preplanning practice are essential for an evacuation that preserves health/safety and property. The MWC Evacuation Coordinator program is shown in the Facilitator Resources.

Activity 3

Activity 3 provides an opportunity to assess the current level of preparedness and identify gaps and needed follow up actions. Encourage participants to add areas of concern to those provided.

As facilitator, it is important to emphasize that Assessing Needs is a critical first step in assuring that a complete response plan is developed. Participants should work in small groups, by employer, or individually.

Facilitate a report back of one follow-up needed from each group.

Actions/Support Needed from Management

Ask “What response activities are outside the responsibilities of the team members, including the Incident Commander/Evacuation Coordinator?” Make a list where all can see.

Activity 4

This activity can be used to identify level of knowledge of reporting and support of management and prior activities that (if conducted) could have been resources for the those involved. It can be completed for those with an EAP (read exit as evacuation and Emergency Response Team as outside responders), or as written for those with an ERP. Responses will be unique to each company represented by the group.

Facilitate a report back, especially regarding prior actions. This will underscore the need for planning so that ‘worst case’ can be considered prior to an emergency and all needed equipment/supplies/resources are in place.

Summary

Refer to the Participant Guide and review the listing.

- Emergency Response Team
 - Emergency Response Plan (ERP)
 - Structure of the Incident Command System (ICS)
 - Function of the Incident Commander (IC)
- Evacuation Team
 - Emergency Action Plan (EAP)
 - Structure of the Evacuation Team
 - Function of the Person-in-Charge/Coordinator/Incident Commander
- Matching Training to Activities
- Functions of Management

Ask: Are there questions?

Closing and Program Evaluation

Time requirement: 20 Minutes

Number of facilitators: 1 or more, consistent with ratio shown in the Minimum Criteria

Materials

- Whiteboard or equivalent; markers
- Evaluation Forms
- Certificates

Objectives

- Restate course objectives
- Explain the purpose of the course evaluation form: to get feedback about the course and facilitator(s). This feedback will help facilitators and program managers identify any weaknesses in program content and delivery. It is required by the funding agency.
- Answer any remaining questions
- Distribute program certificates to those who achieved Successful Completion (see Program Director for up-to-date definition)

Teaching Methods

Discussion

Suggested Facilitator Preparation

Be prepared to discuss the role of evaluation in program improvement. Ask Program Director for an example!

Review questions that may be raised by participants

Minimum Content Requirements

- Summarize program content
- Answer remaining questions

Questions You May Be Asked

“How do I get more training?”

Refer the participant to your program director or coordinator for other programs offered.

Presentation of the Session

This session can be presented as follows:

Review objectives

Emphasize that this is an awareness program

ERP and EAP are structured plans

- requirements are different
- goal to preserve safety and health is the same

Introduce the evaluation process

Explain that each participant should complete the Evaluation Form. When most appear to have finished, ask: “Could you please review the form to make sure you have responded to all the questions where you rate the program or facilitators”?

After the participants have completed the evaluation form, ask them how they plan to use what was learned.

Award program certificates, and make closing remarks

Thank everyone for participating and encourage participants to use information they learned to remain safe and healthy.