Preparing to manage incident response

Speed read

- Successful management of an incident response depends on the activities undertaken to prepare before an incident occurs.
- Incident Management Plans outline arrangements to be applied in incident response and recovery and are enacted through the implementation of procedures that are documented and regularly revised.
- Internal and external stakeholders need to be informed of risks and prevention and preparedness actions they can take to mitigate and prepare for the consequences of an incident.

Key points

- **Incident management capability and capacity involves pre-incident preparation activities such as:**
  - » conducting risk assessments and planning
  - » engaging stakeholders
  - » designing incident management structures
  - » developing plans
  - » conducting Incident Management Team training and exercising
  - » establishing incident management facilities and systems
  - » developing relationships and building partnerships.

- **The Incident Response Plan may include:**
  - » a risk assessment
  - » activation
  - » alert and notification requirements
  - » operational objectives
  - » leadership and network structures
  - » roles and responsibilities
  - » financial delegations
  - » communication arrangements
  - » information management source capability and capacity arrangements e.g. Mutual Aid
  - » contingency arrangements
  - » transition to recovery
  - » business resumption arrangements.

- **Stakeholders may also have actions that should be taken in the management of the response to an incident.** Depending on the context, stakeholders may include: personnel, community groups and/or members, contractors and suppliers, customers, regulators, emergency services, neighbouring residents and businesses.

- **The organisational structure for managing the response to an incident should be specific to the entity and identified prior to an incident occurring.** Clear authority, delegation and role responsibilities is important for an effective incident management structure.

- **Appropriate facilities and technology are required to enable effective incident management.**
  Resources required for an incident management facility may include:

  - » communications (telephones/VOIP services)
  - » ample power outlets
  - » white boards
  - » computers
  - » display screens

  - » stationary
  - » plans and procedure documents
  - » adequate space and seating
  - » break out rooms, including for workforce wellbeing
  - » 24x7 access and building services.

- **Exercises are critical to ensuring Incident Management Plans and Procedures are understood and evaluated.** Personnel in the incident management structure will be more effective if they train and exercise together.

Take action

- Develop an incident management structure for your entity using the examples in the Handbook.
- Identify your entity's incident management facility and what resources may be needed.
- Plan and deliver an incident management exercise in your community or workplace or identify someone who can. Refer to the *Managing Exercises* Handbook for further advice.

More information

- Incident Management, Chapter 2 (AIDR 2023)
- Incident Management Case Studies (AIDR 2023)
- ISO 31000: 2018 Risk management – Guidelines
- Emergency Planning (AIDR 2020)
- Managing Exercises (AIDR 2023)
- Community Engagement for Disaster Resilience Handbook (AIDR 2020)
- National Emergency Risk Assessment Guidelines Handbook (AIDR 2020)
- Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System