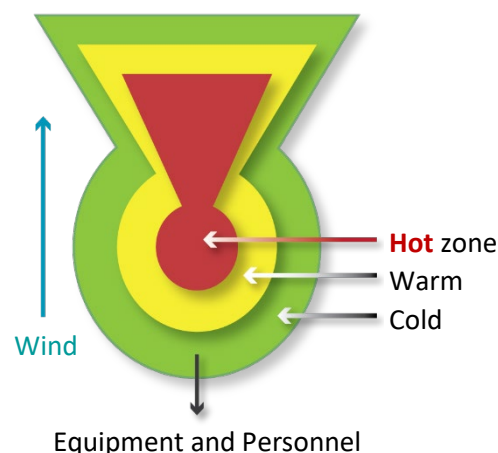


TOPIC 9: STAGING AREA, RECEPTION CENTRE AND ROADBLOCKS

Staging Areas

Staging Areas are safe areas outside of the hot zone created to receive and maintain a ready reserve of tactical resources to manage an incident. The decision to establish a Staging Area can be made at any time, but is generally determined during the development of the Incident Action Plan.

Resources can be 'checked-in' at this location and remain on standby until it is safe to move into the incident area. Oversight of the Staging Area is the responsibility of the Operations Section. A Staging Area Manager is assigned, and while they commonly receive support from other roles in the organization, especially the Logistics Section, they report directly to the Operations Section Chief.



Ideal Characteristics of a Staging Area

Consider the following when selecting an area for staging resources:

- Is it located within a short travel distance from the incident?
- Is it at risk from the incident if conditions (such as wind direction) change?
- Will the site have good communications with the Incident Command Post (ICP) and incident site?
- Is it large enough to allow for vehicles to safely park and remain at that location?
- Can vehicles turn around safely in the area, if necessary?
- Will the Staging Area be used as a space for safety and operational briefings/debriefings?
- Is there a place for mapping/situational displays for briefing resources before dispatching to site?
- Will it be used for medical assessments and treatment, and decontamination of equipment and responders?
- Can the Staging Area be used for helicopter landings or is it a designated landing site?
- Can appropriate facilities be established to maintain a safe and functional area (washrooms, tents or trailers to offer shelter to personnel, etc.)?

During the early phases of an incident when a full response crew has not yet been assembled, Staging Areas may sometimes be set up in conjunction with a roadblock, enabling the roadblock crew to provide initial support while also controlling traffic flow.

Staging Areas are important as part of overall incident management and accountability. They help confirm each resource reporting to the Area Manager has been identified and accounted for, they track the equipment order, and ensure all resources are notified when they are to be demobilized, preventing ongoing and unnecessary expenses.

Roadblocks

Roadblocks are one of the first and most important actions taken to protect people from an incident. Permit holders have an obligation to promptly and effectively prevent individuals from entering a hazardous area. This is a TACTICAL action, and no additional permissions are needed to implement a road closure when continued use of the road places the road user at risk from the incident.



For Petroleum Development Roads (PDRs), the authority for closure is the BC Oil and Gas Commission, and the road permit holder must also be advised. Named/numbered roads including provincial highways are under the authority of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, typically managed by regional contractors. As soon as possible, the appropriate regulatory authority (BC Oil and Gas Commission) must be contacted to be advised of the incident, and request official direction to close the road. For closure of major routes, it is recommended to notify the nearest RCMP detachment, and seek support from professional flagging crews.

Ideal Characteristics for Roadblock Sites

- Roadblocks must be set in a location that provides good visibility/safety for both crews and drivers.
- If pre-selecting sites, consider weather-related challenges to stopping, such as hills and curves.
- The defined edge of an Emergency Planning Zone is the minimum distance for a roadblock.
- Communications from the roadblock is vital, so use locations where cell service is working.
 - Roadblock crews often provide additional monitoring for H₂S/LELs, ensuring any changes affecting safety are communicated back to the Incident Command Post.
 - Road users may need to call and advise other road users of the situation.

Planning and Operations Sections must consider how long crews will be on-site, be aware of vehicle fuel levels, ability to recharge phones, effects of weather, and the need for meals and sanitation breaks.

Reception Centres

During an incident, the hazard may affect the health and safety of residents in occupied dwellings. If the situation escalates to where it is necessary to evacuate residents, a reception centre must be established to provide shelter until the incident is over and it is safe for residents to return to their homes.

A reception centre must offer a safe and adequate space to ensure evacuees' needs are met for the duration of the hazard. Considerations must be given to those with special needs, and to keeping family members together. In many cases, the reception centre may be a hotel, and the assigned Reception Centre Manager must ensure critical needs are being met, and displaced residents are informed to the greatest extent possible of the incident status.



Some evacuees may seek alternate accommodation, but still should be checked in at the reception centre to account for their safety and verify their contact information in order they can be reached with incident status updates. In the event of a large-scale incident affecting many residents, the local government authority may need to be contacted to assist with Emergency Support Services. The availability of these services should be confirmed as part of Emergency Management Planning.