

Objective #1 Notification of Response/Support Agencies Demonstrate, or discuss in a tabletop exercise, the ability to notify response and support agencies, and to mobilize emergency personnel.
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A Basic Intent

This Objective addresses the ability of dispatch and/or response personnel to receive notice of an incident and promptly mobilize response and support personnel.

B Discussing the Points of Review

1. *Were local procedures and/or guidelines followed to document the incident call and to determine if hazardous materials were involved?*

Facility and/or transporters are required to notify the local fire department and the LEPC's Emergency Coordinator (within 30 minutes) when they have an incident. This notification provides specific information about the release and the associated hazards. Personnel receiving the call must be ready to gather and forward this information to First Responders and key support agencies. If someone calls in the accident other than the spiller, personnel need to be cognizant of signs that a hazardous material may be involved. This information should be documented and passed along to the initial responders. Awareness level training also teaches First Responders to recognize when hazardous materials are released and to notify the appropriate agencies as per the local plan. As information is obtained, it should be documented and relayed in accordance with those procedures and/or guidelines. Along these lines, some plans or SOPs will utilize a special form to gather and record information about a chemical incident. NOTE: Local procedures may include, but are not limited to, County Haz Mat Plan, County Emergency Operations Plan, Agency Standard Operating Guidelines.

2. *Were appropriate local personnel (i.e. HM Team, Fire, Police, Medical Facility, and EMA) dispatched and/or notified of the hazardous materials emergency?*

At a minimum, the local Fire Department and Law Enforcement agencies need to be notified. Dispatch offices should have current emergency contact lists or plans that identify who to call during a chemical spill. Also, the local plan may dictate that other agencies such as the local emergency medical facility, EMA, ARC, etc. will be notified at the onset of a chemical release.

3. *Were appropriate state and federal agencies (i.e. OEPA, SFM, ODH, PUCO, NRC, Chemtrec, and USCG) notified and requested to provide support for the hazardous materials emergency?*

The IC should ensure calls were made to contact agencies for response support or technical assistance. The local community should have pre-planned what assistance they will call upon from various state and federal agencies. For example, OEPA provides an On-Scene Coordinator (OSC) to coordinate activities for hazardous substance releases that impact the environment. Meanwhile, the SFM's Arson Bureau may provide response guidance when explosive materials have been released and Ohio Department of Health (ODH) can provide support when radioactive materials are released. The PUCO's Transportation Dept. can provide field liaisons for technical and investigative assistance during transportation incidents. Federally, Chemtrec can be used to gain information about transporters who have a hazardous materials release.

Note that most of these agencies can provide support during exercises *if requested in advance*. Consult the local plan, the State EOP and/or the National Response Framework for more information on state/federal response roles.

4. *Were the notifications made in a timely manner?*

The question of whether or not notifications are made in a timely manner may be somewhat subjective. If a call was delayed, the Evaluator will need to distinguish if other activities took precedence over the call or if the notification was simply overlooked. Also, the notification does not stop after the first units are dispatched. As the initial size-up of the scene is completed, the IC will need to advise dispatchers on the incident status and who to alert next.

5. *Was adequate information about the scene's assessment provided to the response and support agencies when notified?*

As personnel begin to complete an initial scene assessment, relevant portions of that information should be relayed to dispatchers, to those being sent to the scene, and to the off-site agencies supporting the response. This will give them some lead time to research the hazards by consulting DOT guidebooks or obtaining technology-based information. It will also give certain support agencies (i.e. medical facilities, shelter officials, EOC staff) enough *lead time and information* to properly set up their support operations. The IC working with dispatcher should ensure that when agencies are first alerted they are given preliminary information about the incident.

6. *Were the actions taken based on existing plans and/or operating procedures?*

Procedures to document the initial call and make subsequent notifications are required to be part of the LEPC plan. These procedures may also be spelled out in agency SOPs such as at the 9-1-1 center or separate dispatch locations. Separate procedures and/or guidelines should be coordinated so they do not have multiple agencies making the same notification.

C Exercise Design and Control Issues

Since this Objective is fairly straightforward, there are only a few issues to address when it comes to the exercise design and control. The design simply requires a scenario. In fact, the scenario can be as detailed or vague as the Exercise Design Team wishes. The initial call will generate a response sufficient to evaluate activities.

For Tabletop exercises, the Exercise Design Team will simply need to have a dispatcher participate and address how procedures are implemented. If more than one site dispatches, the Exercise Design Team should invite personnel from each location to participate. And in this case, the exercise may be able to identify and clarify differences in dispatch procedures.

For Functional and Full-Scale exercises, there will need to be sufficient dispatch personnel available to manage the exercise and still handle the normal/real emergency calls. Also, the Controllers and dispatchers should be briefed as to how/when to call-off the exercise or put it on hold should a real emergency require the dispatchers' full attention. Next, dispatchers and responders will need to be briefed on what assets can/will be called versus which agencies will only require a simulated notification. This is equally important for agencies that are called for technical information such as OEPA or Chemtrec. If this type of asset is not playing and responders require the technical information, Controllers will need to be ready to answer and provide the requested information.

D Evaluation Needs and Issues

To evaluate this Objective, the Evaluator needs to be someone who understands the local dispatching process. The person can be either a local responder or someone from within the dispatching service.

This Objective is typically evaluated at the central dispatch facility. This is the easiest location from which to observe the various Points of Review. If more than one dispatch facility is likely to be used, there should be an Evaluator in each dispatch location. If the Exercise Design Team chooses to evaluate this Objective from the scene, the team will need to provide the Evaluator(s) with a means to monitor the notifications. This can be complicated if resources are alerted on multiple channels or via methods other than radio. In either case, the Evaluator(s) will need to be briefed on which assets will be participating, in what order they are likely to be alerted, and by what method they are notified. This will allow the Evaluator(s) to objectively evaluate if planned procedures and/or guidelines were followed or not.

This Objective is well suited to be evaluated along with Objective #6, Communications.