

# Safety Management System Modules

## Element 26 – Emergency Management

### What and Why

There is no point waiting for something to go wrong before deciding how to respond to unwanted events. Knowing how to respond to an emergency significantly aids response times of emergency services and limit the potential consequences of the emergency.

The law requires all accredited operators to have a risk-based emergency management plan for their operations. There are a number of components to the plan which must be included.

These include that the plan is:

- Prepared in consultation with emergency services (and any other party) that are likely to attend an emergency;
- Kept up to date with the law;
- Provided to the relevant emergency services and others who are likely to attend;
- Tested;

Used when an emergency occurs.

### How

All operators must therefore assess the types of emergencies that can occur at their operations and develop an Emergency Management Plan for inclusion in their SMS.

Types of emergencies to consider include (but are not limited to) derailment/rollover, collision (train to train, level crossing collision (vehicle/pedestrian), boiler failure and fire (on board train and in the rail corridor), crew or passenger medical emergency.

An Emergency Management Plan (EMP) should have several components and each of these is taken separately for simplicity:

- **Initial Response**
  - When are the emergency services summonsed?
  - Who contacts the emergency services?
  - How the location of the emergency will be accurately identified and communicated. Identifying the relevant information that must be communicated to the emergency services;
  - The immediate actions to be taken to assess the severity of the emergency;
  - The actions to be taken to prevent the emergency from becoming worse;
  - What assistance is immediately available to injured persons?
  - Evacuation plans. How will people be evacuated and to where?
  - What actions can be taken to prevent potential environmental damage?
  - What is the role each person plays during the emergency?
  - Who is the liaison with the emergency services and will provide them with all the information they reasonably require to be able to respond effectively? (This may not be the same persons who initially contacts the emergency services.)

- **Investigation**

- Investigations are included in Module 22 - Management of Notifiable Occurrences, as there are a number of processes involved in this;
- Rail operators may wish to refer to this module in their EMPs, or to combine the information about investigations into the EMP.

- **Recovery & Resumption of Services**

- Estimating the resources (and identifying where they will be obtained from) required to recover and remove damaged rolling stock, reinstate rail infrastructure and any other property damage.

Generally, the following must apply and operators should consider that:

It is often difficult for smaller less-complex operators to prepare emergency plans in conjunction with emergency services and other parties. To assist, document all attempts to involve emergency services in EMP development. Also ensure a copy of the Emergency Management Plan is sent to the regional/local emergency services with an invitation to provide feedback and test the plan:

- Council;
- Fire and Emergency services representatives;
- Local Area Command Police force; and
- Ambulance services –.

Rail operators should consider how their Emergency Management Plans fit with other parties plans, such as Councils or other interfaced rail infrastructure managers/operators.

A copy of the Emergency Management Plan needs to be readily available to those who may be required to implement the plan.

The plan must be tested periodically.

A copy of the plan should be provided to the emergency services and they should be invited to participate when you test the plan.

A copy of the Emergency Management Plan needs to be readily available to those who may be required to implement the plan and they must be trained in and practice implementing the plan. This involves testing the plan periodically.

A copy of the plan must be provided to the emergency services and they must be invited to participate when you test the plan.

The emergency management plans need not be long, but they must show that the main situations have been identified and plans are in place to deal with them if they arise.

The plan must be a compilation of the possible emergency scenarios and the actions to respond to these.

Possible emergencies must have been included in operational risk assessments, and controls identified to prevent occurrence. The details of these and immediate response steps to minimise the consequences must be included.

SMS procedures must include the process for the first person on site, who is to call the emergency services and to notify key persons within the organisation.

When operators are operating on a branch line controlled by a rail infrastructure manager, the RIM may require compliance to their emergency management processes. In this case, the operator must ensure that everyone is trained in that process.

Any response procedure must include a list of phone numbers and contacts for each type of emergency, for example, fire services, the gas/electricity company

Evidence that emergency services advice was sought in preparing the plan.

Accompanying procedures for keeping, maintaining and testing the plan.

Staff have been briefed on the plans and they are tested routinely in-house and with relevant emergency services.

The plan provides details of the roles and responsibilities of everyone who will be involved in the event of an emergency.

All employees, volunteers, contractors and external agencies have been provided with, or have access to, a copy of the plan.

## Who

Anyone who performs any type of work for the operator on site must:

- Have access to the plan;
- Understand the plan;
- Be trained in and may be required to implement the plan.

Any person who has a role or responsibilities in plan should comply with those.

Emergency service organisations and other relevant bodies should have a copy of the plan.

The Board/Executive Committee and /or Risk Committee may want to review the EMP as part of their governance obligations.

Managers and supervisors should ensure that the plan is appropriate to the operations and is practical and communicated to all relevant parties.

Emergency services are likely to take control of the incident site when they arrive.

Once emergency services take control of a site, the operator must comply with their instructions regardless of the details in the plan.

## When

The plan is tested as a suitable time with a frequency appropriate to the scope and scale of the operations.

## List of relevant documents (internal)

Element 16 – Risk Management

Element 25 – Security Management

## Links (external)

[ONRSR – Guideline – Small isolated line heritage operations – Safety Management System \(SMS\)](#)

[ONRSR Website – Guideline - Safety Management System](#)

[ONRSR Website – Rail Safety National Law](#)

[NTC Australian Dangerous Goods Code](#)

[Australian National Security Website](#)

[Australian Government \(Business.gov.au\) website – Emergency Management](#)

[Workplace Health and Safety Queensland](#)

[Australian Red Cross – Preparing an Emergency Plan](#)

[Safework NSW – Emergency Planning](#)

[Queensland Fire and Emergency Services - Emergency Planning](#)

## Appendices / Examples

None