

Introduction to incident management

Speed read

- Effective incident management capability and capacity is a key strategy for reducing business and community disruption and building resilience.
- Successful management of an incident response depends on the activities undertaken to prepare before an incident occurs.
- There are 10 principles of incident management.

Key points

- **Having the capability and capacity to respond effectively to incidents reduces the likelihood of incidents escalating into an uncontrolled emergency or crisis.** The effective management of an incident can assist in limiting the scale of consequences arising from the incident. Consequences can include:
 - » death, injury, psychological distress
 - » financial loss
 - » short- and long-term disruption to an entity or community
 - » physical and environmental damage
 - » reputational damage
 - » loss of confidence and trust in entities and systems.
- **Incident management capability and capacity involves pre-incident activities** such as conducting risk assessments, developing plans, engaging stakeholders, building relationships, establishing facilities and conducting training and exercises.
- **The Incident Management Team (IMT)** brings together functional specialists from within and external to the organisation (e.g. legal communications, technical). The IMT:
 - » builds a picture of shared situational awareness about the incident
 - » develops forecasts and predictions
 - » prepares a plan of action detailing what needs to be done, how, when and by who
 - » considers the risks associated with implementing the plan and what are the mitigation strategies for such risks
 - » monitors implementation of the plan
 - » manages resources and implements actions to achieve the plan
 - » continually reviews the plan and reassess the risks as the incident evolves ensuring the plan remains fit for purpose
 - » engages with stakeholders, customers and communities
 - » maintains and stores records of deliberations and decisions, plans and initiates a transition to recovery.

- **The Incident Management Plan is based on a set of assumptions and forecasts about the way an incident will unfold.** When an incident occurs, these pre-determined plans may not fully cover the consequences. The assumptions made may not be correct or may change. There is often a requirement to adapt the plan or create solutions to unforeseen issues and need to develop a dynamic plan of action to provide a roadmap to be implemented by the IMT.
- **Each incident response or exercise provides an opportunity to identify lessons and improvement opportunities.** These improvement opportunities may relate to areas such as plans, operational procedures, staff capability, stakeholder management or response resources.

Take action

- Save or print out the *Principles of Incident Management* for easy reference.
- Review the [Incident Management Case Studies](#) to understand different entities approaches to incident management.

More information

- Incident Management (AIDR 2023)
- Incident Management Case Studies (AIDR 2023)
- Australian Emergency Management Arrangements (AIDR 2022)
- Emergency Planning (AIDR 2020)
- Lessons Management (AIDR 2019)
- Managing Exercises (AIDR 2023)
- [ISO 31000: 2018 Risk management – Guidelines](#)
- [Australasian Inter-service Incident Management System](#)