



Section 9220

96-Hour Plan Guiding Response Leadership in Identifying Priorities and Tasks within the First 96 Hours of a Major Incident

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9220

96 Hour Plan for Major Incidents

9220.1 Introduction

The purpose of this 96 Hour Plan is to provide strategic guidance to support rapid, well-coordinated, extended and continuous operations for a major incident. To ensure success, response leaders (agencies and potential spillers alike) need to ask the right questions, engage all partners fully, refer to the right plans and set the right priorities for a major incident. This plan can help establish or accelerate operational momentum, build interagency coordination and earn public trust. This guidance reflects lessons learned, taken from spills and exercises, as well as input from northwest area committee members. The target audience for this plan is the key leadership positions at the command staff and section chief level. The target audience for this plan is the key leadership positions at the command staff and section chief level, not tactical operations.

This section contains a major incident response milestone checklist, a table on critical notifications and guidance for response leaders to enhance communication during a major response. The milestones presented in the 96 Hour Checklist are aspirational, intended to guide responders towards success. Not all checklist items are applicable to every incident and not all will be started or finished within the aspirational timelines. The checklist is a tool, designed to posture (not mandate) or refine response professionals' ability to simultaneously champion mission success and transparency, given the totality of the circumstances.

9220.2 Milestone Checklist

The purpose of this checklist is to guide response leadership in identifying major tasks, in a relative order of priority, to accomplish within the first 96 hours of a major incident response. Once leaders have determined the context of the situation and initial priorities, the checklist will then support them in establishing a work cycle for extended, continuous operations. Every response is different and therefore these milestones are aspirational, intended to guide responders towards success. The critical steps should be taken early to establish operational momentum, build interagency coordination and earn public trust.

It is understood that in the early hours of an incident, responding agencies and potential responsible parties may each take similar steps (for example, make notifications). It is also understood that initially a single individual may be performing multiple roles as the response organization builds. Some of these tasks will be started prior to forming a unified command, until we begin to perform them together at an incident command post, under a unified command.

Major Incident Response Milestone Checklist

Use this form to record the time a task has been completed. Assume that proper notifications have initiated the response. The milestones/tasks mark the hours that certain activities should begin, though they may take several more hours or days to complete. Every response is different and therefore these milestones are aspirational, intended to guide responders towards success. Not all milestones are appropriate for every response.

Prior to Officially Forming a Unified Command**Day 1 Hour +2**

| √ | Assigned To | Task |
|---|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | Type and classify the incident to assess the risk. |
| | | Begin federal/state/trustee/local stakeholder response partner notifications. |
| | | Determine immediate responder and community risks including the need and resources for air monitoring. |
| | | Establish safety/security zones. (may be done via Captain Of The Port Order in marine zones) |
| | | Consider the need to evacuation personnel or residents. |
| | | Establish initial incident objectives. |
| | | Begin ICS form 201. |
| | | Develop initial hazard assessment worksheet and start work on initial site specific safety plan. |
| | | Mobilize initial assessment teams (land, water and aerial, as necessary). |
| | | Identify the PIO and connect to other PIOs. Establish an initial conference call, connect by e-mail or set up a meeting. |
| | | Issue initial joint (response agency) press release (between 30 minutes and 2 hours per area plan policy). |
| | | Determine initial resources for responding. |
| | | Begin resource tracking. |
| | | Identify Unified Command members. Establish time for an initial conference call, connect by e-mail or set up a meeting. |

Unified Command Has Formed, Is Not Yet Co-Located**Day 1 Hour +3**

| √ | Assigned To | Task |
|---|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | Request Scientific Support Coordinator assistance and order trajectories. |
| | | Obtain Safety Data Sheet(s) or other data from spiller to identify oil / hazardous material properties. |
| | | Establish overflight assessment and observation feedback loop to response partners. |
| | | Identify Geographic Response Plan priorities. Communicate on priorities with response contractors. Begin compiling ICS Form 232, Resources at Risk form. |

| √ | Assigned To | Task |
|---|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | Determine port closure options/necessity. |
| | | Establish contact with local Emergency Operations Center/City/County Emergency Managers, begin to share information. |
| | | Continue making broader tribal, elected official and stakeholder notifications. |
| | | Locate and secure joint Command Post, as needed. |

**Unified Command Has Formed, Has Plans and Timeframe to Co-Locate
Day 1 Hour +5**

| √ | Assigned To | Task |
|---|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | Transition to joint Command Post as necessary. |
| | | Agree on common operating picture. |
| | | Request Endangered Species Act emergency consultation, using information from the ICS Form 232 and the form provided in Section 9404. |
| | | Identify and notify commercial / private fish and shellfish owners. Identify and notify downstream drinking, agricultural, and industrial water users. Communicate with the Environmental Unit. |
| | | Determine need and establish temporary flight restriction, as necessary. |
| | | Consider whether vessel of opportunity skimming systems, public equipment caches or U.S. Naval response resources (local or SUPSALV) are needed. Order as applicable. |
| | | Engage with tribal enforcement and local health departments to open communication concerning shelter in place, fisheries closures and water user impacts. |
| | | Coordinate to determine staging areas. |
| | | Consider night operations, begin planning for staffing, support and shifts, as appropriate. |
| | | For cross border incident (international or state boundaries), establish liaison between governments/Governors. |
| | | Identify accommodations (hotels, motels, etc.) and food service companies to support responders. |
| | | If appropriate to consider use of dispersants or in-situ burning, notify trustees and tribes to allow time to work through the decision process. |
| | | If appropriate to consider use of dispersants or in-situ burning, mobilize necessary resources. |

**Unified Command Has Joined Together at an Initial Command Post
Hour +10 Day 1**

| √ | Assigned To | Task |
|---|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | Unified Command to establish overall incident objectives. |
| | | Identify limitations and constraints, critical information requirements. |
| | | Establish Situation Display and gather facts and data to support the response. |

| | |
|--|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Identify expanded list of resources at risk and complete an ICS form 232. |
| | Establish Communication Plan, including timing of media releases, social media and press conference protocols. |
| | Establish Liaison Plan |
| | Obtain source sample. Plan for sampling needs for the response. |
| | If appropriate, order “hot shot” SCAT resources for assessing extent of oiling and potential passive techniques to prevent re-oiling. Plan for long term SCAT. |
| | Expand staging areas as needed. |
| | Establish briefing schedule for elected officials and agencies. |
| | Conduct media briefings. |
| | Launch a unified, incident-specific web site. |
| | Consider whether the Command Post is suitable for a long term response. |
| | Develop process of managing claims. |

Day 2 Hour +24

| √ | Assigned To | Task |
|---|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | The Information Officer and Liaison Officer together determine the need / timing for community meetings. |
| | | Consider as a best practice, hosting or touring media on or near the scene. |
| | | Assess wildlife impacts. Activate Wildlife Infrastructure as needed. |
| | | Consult with cultural / historical resource specialists as needed. |
| | | Stand up Maritime Transportation System Recovery Unit (MTSRU) and begin cargo prioritization, if appropriate. |
| | | Develop long term staffing and demobilization plans, establish fatigue guidelines. |
| | | Determine documentation management protocols. |
| | | Evaluate the effectiveness of recovery tactics to maximize recovery. |
| | | Plan for disposal, waste issues. |
| | | Plan for decontamination of response / commercial / non-commercial vessels. |
| | | Consider salvage and transfer needs (lightering, etc). |
| | | Communicate the claims process to communities, municipalities and business owners. |
| | | Implement west coast mutual aid agreement and begin cascading of resources from out of region, if necessary. |
| | | Inform or otherwise convene the Regional Response Team (RRT) for assistance. |
| | | Finalize, distribute, and brief safety plan. |
| | | Establish a volunteer policy as necessary, and develop a volunteer management plan. |
| | | Track all costs and communicate a burn rate to Unified Command. |

Day 3 Hour +48

| √ | Assigned To | Task |
|---|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| | | Develop long term staffing and demobilization plans. |
| | | Refine vessel traffic plan. |
| | | Activate Volunteer Management Plan, as needed. |
| | | Continue communication with the incident specific RRT. |
| | | Adjust daily cycle of activities accordingly. |

Day 3-4 Hour +96

| √ | Assigned To | Task |
|---|-------------|----------------------------------|
| | | Continue communication with RRT. |
| | | Adjust daily cycle accordingly. |

9220.3 Notification Matrix

The notification matrix identifies key notifications that federal and state officials and responsible parties have protocols or obligations for conducting. Multiple notifications to the same organizations are expected and are acceptable. It is a best practice for agencies to verify their notification lists at least annually.

| Audience | Federal/State Authority | Incident Command Function/Connection |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Federal and State Emergency Notification Call Centers | | Responsible Party |
| International Partner Coordination (CCG, EC) | USCG/EPA | |
| Regional Response Team | USCG/EPA | UC |
| RRT X Executive Committee Agencies | USCG/EPA/STATES | UC/Liaison |
| USCG Strike Team | USCG/EPA | UC/Operations |
| Scientific Support Coordinator | USCG/EPA | UC/Environmental Unit (EU) |
| Federal Trustees including NOAA, DOI, Agriculture | USCG/EPA | EU/Liaison |
| State Trustees including Fish, Wildlife, Game, Parks, Health, Historic Preservation, Natural Resources | STATES | EU/Liaison |
| Tribes | USCG/EPA/STATES | EU/Liaison/UC |
| Public Health Agencies | STATES | EU/Liaison/UC |
| County and City Emergency Managers | STATES | UC/Liaison |
| White House Officials | USCG/EPA | Liaison |
| Governors | STATES | Liaison |
| Congressional Representatives | USCG/EPA/STATES | Liaison |
| State Legislative Representatives | STATES | Liaison |
| Local Elected Officials | STATES | Liaison |
| Affected Ports | USCG /STATES | MTSRU/Liaison |
| Municipal Government | STATES | UC/Liaison |

| Audience | Federal/State Authority | Incident Command Function/Connection |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| County Government | STATES | UC/Liaison |
| State law enforcement and fire agencies | USCG/EPA/STATES | UC/Operations |
| Tribal law enforcement and local health authorities for fish closure | USCG/EPA/STATES | EU/Liaison/UC |
| Notifications contained in Geographic Response Plans | USCG/EPA/STATES | EU/Liaison |

9220.4 Enhance Communications

This Section provides guidance to response leadership that will enhance communications in a major incident in a way that establishes operational momentum, builds interagency coordination and earns public trust. These communication strategies should be incorporated by response leadership into training, internal procedures and practiced at drills.

Use Strategic Messaging

Communication should be at the epi-center of a major response. Federal, state, local, and responsible party leadership should employ rapid, aggressive and targeted strategic messaging to gain the confidence of the public, tribes and elected officials during a response.

- Strategic messaging means intentional planning for a flow of credible information over the course of an extended response, using all relevant modes of communication.

Strategic messaging should not be confused with routine public affairs outreach. It builds on strong existing relationships developed with the media and elected officials, and should be cultivated before spills occur on a routine basis. These relationships will result in communication that is clear and compelling, tailored to the local audience and focused on the key issues of risk communication, safety and environmental issues, and public safety and security during a response.

Examples of strategic messaging identified in this area plan are:

- Report the volume of the spill in terms of the potential maximum quantity or use a range of potential volumes if necessary. Be prepared to explain how the actual volume will be determined. Having to change an initially reported spill volume will diminish credibility, yet reporting a spill volume is a critical data point for the public.
- Get agreement in the most immediate manner possible about incident facts that can be spoken to in the early hours; for example, information on the ICS 201 form. It takes time to ascertain facts about a crisis. Waiting for “perfect” information does not help build trust.
- Be prepared to speak about the plans that we have in place, the national framework for response and the assets being brought to bear to the response.

Media Outreach

Federal, state, local, and responsible party Public Information Officers (PIOs) should conduct rapid and aggressive media outreach campaigns during a major response. Outreach should focus on demonstrating and conveying the capability of the unified command to manage the response. Failure to make this effort may result in competing media coverage that could send contrary or misleading information. Even in situations where information is incomplete, response leadership should hold daily press conferences.

Examples of effective outreach identified in this area plan are:

- Allowing the media escorted access to the command post, while still ensuring operational security.
- Allow the media direct access to the unified commanders, as the response allows.

Web-based Media, Television and Print

The public is now more apt to use television, internet, and social media for news. Failure to use these communication modes will result in an information void. In addition to televised press conferences, within 24 hours of a major crisis, responses should incorporate an incident specific web site that allows collaboration between all members of the Unified Command. PIOs should also use social media, including Facebook and Twitter, to deliver information such as scheduled press conferences, major response milestones, major successes, factual data, etc.

- Federal agencies and industry may have restrictions that prevent leadership from capitalizing on the power of social media. Therefore, incident commanders should partner with the state and local agencies to host incident specific web sites and communicate using social media, to effectively tell the operational story.
- The pace of social media requires establishing an early presence on social media. Incident Commanders should encourage and facilitate this by asking for a social media plan and agreeing in the most immediate manner possible about incident facts that can be spoken to in the early hours; for example, information on the ICS 201 form.
- Incident commander should ask to be informed about conversation trends and rumors, and adjust and adapt the communication plans accordingly.

Risk Communication

Federal, state, local, and responsible party incident commanders should rapidly and continuously convey public safety, environmental concerns, security threats, and economic impacts to improve public trust.

Example of a best practice identified in this area plan:

- Consider asking recognized local, regional, or national experts (i.e. NOAA Scientific Support Coordinators, academic experts, local Emergency Managers, etc.) to deliver messages.

Congressional/State/Elected Official/Political Appointee Outreach

Elected officials are included in communications protocols for major responses. They require periodic operational briefs in order to inform their constituents. Response incident commanders should conduct elected official briefings early on in the response once they have gained reliable situational awareness. If response leadership does not maintain an aggressive political outreach program, they run the risk of having to publicly defend response actions in addition to trying to fill an information gap.

- If use of dispersants or in-situ burning are identified as an objective, communicate immediately on the decision process and timing. Commit to communicating again on the final decision.

Town Hall/Public Meetings

Town hall meetings should be coordinated with federal, state, local, and responsible party incident commanders. This has proven an effective method to reach out to the impacted community in a sensitive manner.

Examples of community outreach identified in this area plan are:

- Consider opening up space within communities (“store fronts”) to maximize communication, trust and help communities move towards restoration.

Recommended Flow of Information for News Releases**1st News Releases (within 24 hours)**

- Facts about the incident as known. List of Responding Agencies.
- Information on exclusion zones and evacuations.
- Initial estimated maximum potential spill volumes and methodology for determining an actual volume spilled.
- Air monitoring information. Public safety message. (Coordinated with local Emergency Managers)
- Public information sources, i.e. Twitter, Facebook, response website, etc.
- Equipment/resources deployed. Number of personnel responding.
- Wildlife message/hotline number.
- Claims line (if established).
- Status of public services, i.e. drinking water supply, medical services, etc.
- Any expected impacts to oil availability or gas prices (if applicable).
- Contact phone numbers for media.

Subsequent News Releases (24 +)

- Cause of the spill and status of investigation.
- Vessel/Facility/Pipeline/Railroad/Etc. information.
- Amount of product recovered.
- Injuries or casualties.
- Trajectory of the oil.
- Environmental and wildlife impacts.
- Beach closures.
- Fishery closures.

- Cleanup contractors and additional agencies responding.
- Actions taken, actions planned.
- Resources applied and numbers (equipment and people).
- Special considerations (dispersant use, place of refuge).
- Volunteer Registration Information (if applicable).
- Cost of the spill.