

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE

Background

In the event of an emergency, the Division's primary concern is the safety of students, staff and visitors at its sites, followed by the preservation of property. Through Division and site Emergency Response Plans, specific procedures have been established to ensure the most effective and efficient use of resources for the purposes of emergency preparedness and response.

Definitions

Administrative Command Team (ACT):

Led by the *EOC Director* and provides advice and assistance to the Superintendent and *Incident Commander* during an emergency.

Crisis:

An unplanned present or imminent event that demands immediate action or special regulation of persons or property to protect health, safety or welfare of people, or to limit damage to property. Response protocols required and the need to involve agencies are dependent on the crisis level.

Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Director:

Provides overall leadership and authority at the Division level to schools and departments during an emergency, and coordinates the Division emergency response or Administrative Command Team (ACT).

Functional Protocols:

Standard protocols used when a specific action is required in response to an emergency (ie. evacuation, hold and secure, lockdown, and shelter-in-place). These protocols are used at all Division worksites, and regularly practiced as drills. Refer to the Appendix for a summary.

Hour Zero:

A web-based application used by the Division to store, update and monitor Division, school and department emergency preparedness and response plans (ERP). It follows the incident command system (ICS) for emergency management.

Incident Command System (ICS):

An internationally recognized system for emergency management used by industry and emergency responders. Division and site emergency preparedness plans are based on this framework.

Incident Commander:

The person assigned with overall responsibility for the emergency response at the site level and provides leadership for the site emergency response team (SERT). At school sites, this is the Principal.

Site Emergency Response Team (SERT):

Key staff at a given site that are involved in managing/responding to an emergency.

Procedures

1. In the event of a *Crisis* within a school or administrative facility, the *Incident Commander* has the authority to make immediate decisions regarding emergency response, as guided by site and Division-level emergency plans, *functional protocols*, and procedures.
2. As soon as practical, the *Incident Commander* shall contact the *EOC Director* and the Division's Director of Communications to report the situation and to seek further guidance. The *Incident Commander* will also mobilize members of the *SERT* as required.
3. The *EOC Director* will convene members of the *ACT* to review the incident and provide any necessary support to the *Incident Commander*.
4. In the event of a *Crisis*, the Superintendent, in consultation with the *EOC Director*, has the authority to make final decisions regarding *Crisis* response, as guided by the Division Emergency Response Plan (available through *Hour Zero*), *Functional Protocols*, and procedures.
5. *Crisis* communication with all agencies, public, and media shall follow the lines of authority set out in the respective emergency response plans. All questions or inquiries from the media or public shall be referred to the Division's Director of Communications.
6. The *Incident Commander* at each **school** shall:
 - 6.1 Prepare a school emergency plan (available through *Hour Zero*) and procedures that following Division template(s) and ensure these procedures also address persons with specific needs.
 - 6.2 Review and update plans and procedures in *Hour Zero* online and communicate *Functional Protocols* and procedures annually to all staff, students, and other stakeholders.
 - 6.3 Ensure the site annual checklist in *Hour Zero* online is updated.
 - 6.4 Ensure emergency equipment, supplies, and training required to support a *Crisis* response are maintained.
 - 6.5 Ensure classroom and office emergency folders are updated annually and stored in a visible location near the primary exit.
 - 6.6 Hold drills in accordance with the frequency and schedule set up by the Division Safety Coordinator.
 - 6.7 Notify the security monitoring company prior to any fire drill and the Facilities Department and Technology Department prior to any lockdown drill.
 - 6.8 Keep a record of each drill in the *Hour Zero* online, and a written evaluation of each drill with the site Emergency Response Plan (available through *Hour Zero*).
 - 6.9 Post evacuation routes near exit doors in each room in the school.
 - 6.10 Communicate emergency response protocols and site-specific procedures for staff and substitutes in staff handbooks and classroom folders.
 - 6.11 In a school evacuation, make arrangements to shelter students in an offsite evacuation center as necessary. These arrangements are to be reviewed and documented annually in the site Emergency Response Plan (available through *Hour Zero*).
 - 6.12 Ensure notice is given to staff and students for all lockdown drills so that no surprise drills are conducted.
 - 6.13 Ensure lockdown messaging is sent annually to parents/guardians prior to the first lockdown drill of the school year.

7. The *Incident Commander* at each **administrative facility** shall:
 - 7.1 Prepare an administrative facility emergency plan (available through *Hour Zero*) and procedures that following Division template(s) and ensure these procedures also address persons with specific needs.
 - 7.2 Review and update plans and procedures in *Hour Zero* online and communicate *Functional Protocols* and procedures annually to all staff and other stakeholders.
 - 7.3 Ensure the site annual checklist in *Hour Zero* online is updated.
 - 7.4 Ensure emergency equipment, supplies, and training required to support a *Crisis* response are maintained.
 - 7.5 Ensure department emergency folders are updated annually and stored in a visible location near the primary exit.
 - 7.6 Hold drills in accordance with the frequency and schedule set up by the Division Safety Coordinator.
 - 7.7 Notify the security monitoring company prior to any fire drill and the Facilities Department and Technology Department prior to any lockdown drill.
 - 7.8 Keep a record of each drill in the *Hour Zero* online, and a written evaluation of each drill with the site Emergency Response Plan (available through *Hour Zero*).
 - 7.9 Post evacuation routes near exit doors in each area.
 - 7.10 In a building evacuation, make arrangements to shelter staff in an offsite evacuation center as necessary. These arrangements are to be reviewed and documented annually in the site Emergency Response Plan (available through *Hour Zero*).
 - 7.11 Ensure notice is given for lockdown drills so no surprise drills are conducted.
8. In the event that a provincial or municipal state of emergency is declared, the Division and site Emergency Response Plans (available through *Hour Zero*) shall be superseded by the local jurisdiction's disaster service agency from which all directions for emergency evacuation or other emergency actions shall be directed and coordinated.
9. Pursuant to the Disaster Services Act, all Division employees may be considered disaster workers during a declared emergency, and as such, may be directed to remain on the job until released by their supervisor.

References: Section 18, 20, 45, 45.1, 57, 60, 61, 113 School Act
Disaster Services Act
Emergency Medical Aid Act
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Alberta Building and Fire Code
Occupational Health and Safety Act, Regulation and Code

Appendix: Emergency Preparedness and Response - Summary of Common Functional Protocols (Appendix 150)

Manuals: BRSD Health and Safety Manual (Section 8)

Forms: Emergency Response Plan Drill Report (Section 8 App 1)

Amended: February 2019