Confine Small Emergencies Guide V3

Fire Safety Course

PUAFER008 Confine Small Emergencies in a Facility

Learner Guide

1.1 Introduction

This course is based upon the unit of competency **PUAWER008 Confine Small Emergencies in a Facility.**

For this unit, reference has been made to t.he Australian Standard AS 3745-2010: Planning for emergencies in facilities, which defines a workplace as:

Any place where work is, or is to be, performed by –

a) A person engaged for work for gain or reward, or on a voluntary basis;

b) A person conducting a business or undertaking; or

c) As defined by the relevant Commonwealth, State and Territory occupational health and safety statuses for the definition of 'workplace.'

A small workplace emergency may include such incidents as:

- A small fire that can be controlled with a nearby fire extinguisher.
- A chemical spill that can be controlled using a small spill kit and workplace Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and clothing.
- A workplace vehicle accident involving no significant injury or damage.

1.2 Identify Potential Workplace Emergencies

Before you are able to undertake any planning for emergencies you will need to identify the possible and probable risks for your workplace and the skills and abilities of the team members available to you.

Each workplace will have both general and specific emergency situations to be monitored, assessed and acted upon.

If possible every member of your Emergency Control Organisation (ECO) should participate in the risk analysis exercise so that everyone is aware of the potential problems or issues.

1.2.1 General Emergencies

General emergencies are those that could be faced by every business, and they include:

General Emergencies:	
• Bomb threat.	• Building invasion.
• Armed invasion.	• Criminal activities.
• Accidents.	• Self-harm incidents.
• Toxic emissions.	• Civil disorder incidents.
• Utility failures.	• Fire.
• Hazardous substance incidents.	• Hostage situations.
• Letter bomb.	• Medical emergency.
• Severe weather or storm damage.	• Structural instability
• Terrorism.	• Transport accident.
• Chemical, biological and radiological incidents.	

1.2.2 Specific Emergencies

Specific emergencies are those faced only by your business and other businesses in your area, for example:

- Cyclones.
- Animal or livestock emergencies.
- Storm surges.
- Earthquakes.
- Flood.
- Industrial accidents.
- Veterinary emergencies.
- Wildfire incidents.

1.2.3 Appropriate Emergency Responses

Once the possible and probable risks in your area have been identified, you will be able to develop specific responses, actions, plans, protocols and procedures to determine how you and your team will respond.

All members of the team must then be made aware of these emergency response procedures and receive training in how to implement them.

During emergencies and evacuations it is essential that all possible precautions are taken to prevent injuries. This can be done through constant hazard and risk analysis. In every event, err on the side of caution and always look to preserve life ahead of property.

1.3 Identify and Organise Emergency Response Resources

Emergency resources are those items that can be used to confine or contain an emergency situation or are used to respond to an emergency.

They could include:

Emergency Response Resources	Description or Use
Access Cards or Codes	Used to ensure only appropriate people have access to the resources. Could include swipe cards, barcodes, code numbers or passwords.
Communication Systems	Radios, broadcasts, emails, SMS, landline phones, mobile phones, any other method of communicating between personnel in an emergency.
Surveillance Equipment	Used to remotely monitor areas or systems. Can be used in an emergency to identify the situation or the location of an alarm.
Fire Protection Equipment	Could be any extinguishing equipment such as hand-held fire extinguishers, integrated alarms and sprinklers, fire blankets.
First Aid Kits	Used for the initial treatment of injuries. First aid training is preferable but, if necessary, use the equipment to control bleeding by applying pressure and call for help.
PPE	The specific equipment will vary depending upon the types of emergency responses anticipated.
Barricades	Used to stop access to hazardous areas.
Warning Signs	Should be applied to any areas where the possibility of danger exists or where emergency responses are occurring.
Spill Control Kits	Used to confine and control chemical spills. Will vary depending upon the types of chemicals that would be found within the workplace.
Ventilation Systems	Could be mechanical or manual air handling and movement systems. Will need to be appropriate to the workplace and the anticipated risks.

1.3.1 Locate Resources

Once you have identified the resources for responding to the anticipated emergency, you will need to ascertain the location of all items.

Emergency resources will normally be kept in the most appropriate place within the work area.

For example, some equipment, such as first aid kits and fire extinguishers, will be positioned around the workplace in locations that are signed and easy to recognise and access.

Other emergency equipment may be stored near where an incident is likely to occur. Spill kits, for example, will be kept close to the site where work with chemicals is undertaken.

Communications systems and integrated fire response systems will generally be built into the workplace.

Before using any initial response equipment ensure that all appropriate personnel have had the training to use it safely.

1.4 Maintain Emergency Response Resources

When inspecting the emergency resources for problems you are looking for anything that will affect the operational serviceability or usefulness of that piece of equipment.

Common problems could come from:

Problem	Reason
Lack of Use	Emergency response equipment can deteriorate or stop working if it not used or maintained regularly. It is important for regular checks to be conducted to ensure the equipment is still adequate.
Service Issues	Equipment such as portable fire extinguishers and first aid kits need regular servicing to ensure they function correctly. Without this servicing the equipment may not be ready to respond in an emergency.
Ill-Stocking	If resources such as first aid kits, PPE or spill control kits have not been replenished since their last use, they may not be fully functional.
Being Out of Date	Older equipment may no longer meet the required standards for incidents that may be encountered in the workplace.

A regular program of maintenance and testing will ensure all emergency resources are ready for deployment at any time.

If you find any problems they should be discussed with members of the emergency response team or team leader.

1.4.1 Reporting Equipment Problems

When and if problems with the equipment are identified, it is necessary to report them to the relevant personnel in accordance with workplace procedures.

The decision will then be made whether to repair or replace items and when this will be done.

Tests will also need to be carried out on any items that have been repaired, to ensure they are serviceable again.

If equipment is being replaced, the old equipment will need to be written off in the equipment records and the new equipment entered there as well.

These records will need to be kept in accordance with the requirements of the workplace and the insurance requirements for the organisation.

2.1 Identify and Manage Risks

Emergency situations are never static and conditions can vary greatly. This means that further developments (a deterioration in the situation, or better still, an improvement) are always possible.

In an ever-changing environment you must be able to monitor the developing situation and respond in accordance with emergency procedures for the workplace and for your organisation.

2.1.1 Hazards and Risks

A **hazard** is a thing or situation that causes injury, harm or damage. A **risk** is the chance of a hazard hurting you or somebody else or causing some damage.

If you can remove or at least control a hazard you can reduce the risk involved. This is known as risk management.

2.1.2 Risk Management

Risk management is the process of reducing or managing the risks when working with a hazard or in a hazardous situation.

A dynamic risk assessment (DRA) involves the following six steps:

1. **Hazard Identification**.
2. **Risk Assessment** – Who is at risk? How high is the risk?
3. **Risk Control** – How can the risk be controlled?
4. **Risk Elimination** – How can the risk be eliminated?
5. **Decision** – Weighing up the pros and cons of the decision.
6. **Action versus No Action** – Deciding whether action should be taken.

2.1.3 Identify Hazards and Developments and Take Appropriate Action

Hazards need to be identified so that you can include hazard control measures in your work plan. Following an accident, there may be a range of hazards at the scene.

For most workplace emergencies, potential hazards and developments that need to be monitored and responded to include:

Hazard/Development	Possible Response
Air Contamination	For example, smoke or gas contamination. Monitor and make note of any changes. You may not be able to monitor for some gases without specialist equipment.
Danger of Explosion	Can occur with a variety of situations and not only fire. If there is any hint of an explosion, you should evacuate away from the area, not through it.
Environmental Impact	Damage to the environment should be contained. If this is not possible, make a note of the impacted area for remedial work to be undertaken.
Injury or Loss of Life	Always administer first aid where possible, following all safety and organisational procedures. Also, at the first opportunity, write down all details, no matter how trivial, about how the situation changed and all factors leading to the injury or death.
Damage to Property	Limit the spread of the damage if possible, and keep people away from the area.
Loss of Communications	Stick with the plans and procedures for communication loss. Move people if it is safe to do so. Attempt to re-establish communications.
Loss of Containment	Fall back and continue to respond as required by your organisation's procedures.
Loss of Emergency Resources	Fall back, moving out of harm's way if possible.
Reactions of People	Since people react differently to emergencies, it is necessary for you to monitor everyone in the area to ensure they are coping with the situation. It is 'stay in place' scenarios where the most extreme reactions will normally occur, as there is often nothing to distract people and keep them busy. Where possible, assign tasks to those people you believe could potentially be difficult.
Risk of Increased Threatening Behaviour	Threatening behaviour is a situation where 'stay in place' or lockdown is the best option. If necessary, initiate a more widespread lockdown.
Release of Hazardous Materials	Hazardous material release could include fluids, solids or gases. Could require a change of tactic or a re-evaluation of the risks

	involved.
Risk of Cross-Infection or Contamination	Response will depend on the type of infection or contamination.
Spread of Hazard/Incident Area	Response depends on the nature of the hazard.
Structural Collapse	Any threat of structural collapse will require immediate evacuation of the area.
Threat from Adjoining/Neighbouring Areas	This is a very real threat in many office buildings and workplaces. Be aware of what other businesses around you are doing and the possible threats they pose and take action accordingly.
Vapours, Fumes, Gases	These could require a change in tactic. Normally if fire is not present, it may be best to use a 'stay in place' strategy and attempt to lock out the vapours with wet towels. This will depend on the type of vapours, fumes or gases involved within the workplace.

2.1.4 Consider Likely Effectiveness of Initial Response Action

Emergency initial response planning involves the following steps:

- Regular assessment of potential emergency situations and their associated risks.
- Identification of the safest, most effective initial response actions.
- Implementation of the initial response actions.

When considering the likely effectiveness of initial response actions, you will need to apply the stages of risk management, discussed above, and make adjustments to the plan of attack if necessary.

If you identify a risk or hazard involved with an initial response action you should follow workplace procedures for reporting and managing the risks.

2.2 Seek Emergency Response Advice

You may become involved in an emergency situation that is beyond your level of response training or knowledge, or that requires a response you had not considered.

Your workplace emergency procedures and policies will guide you in seeking further advice.

If you are unsure of the appropriate person to approach for this information, speak with your emergency control team leader or other team members.

Advice can be obtained from:

- Documentation, policies or manuals.
- Emergency services.
- Manufacturers' hotlines.
- Team leader or other personnel.

2.2.1 Documentation, Policies or Manuals

These guidelines will provide information about the organisation's initial response actions. They may include documentation such as Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) as well as other safe handling and emergency response instructions.

2.2.2 Emergency Services

Emergency services, such as the police, fire or ambulance, can be contacted for further advice on how to respond to a situation onsite. This will also place them on alert to provide additional assistance or resources if required.

2.2.3 Manufacturers' Hotlines

Some manufacturers, particularly of chemicals and other harmful substances, will have hotlines that can be contacted in the event of a spill or other emergency.

2.2.4 Team Leader or Other Personnel

The emergency control team leader as well as workplace managers, engineers or chemists will have useful knowledge and experience.

Consulting with an in-house expert on a hazardous substance, for example, will allow you to develop a safe and effective response on the spot.

Also, some personnel may have experience in responding to similar situations outside the workplace and will be able to offer helpful information.

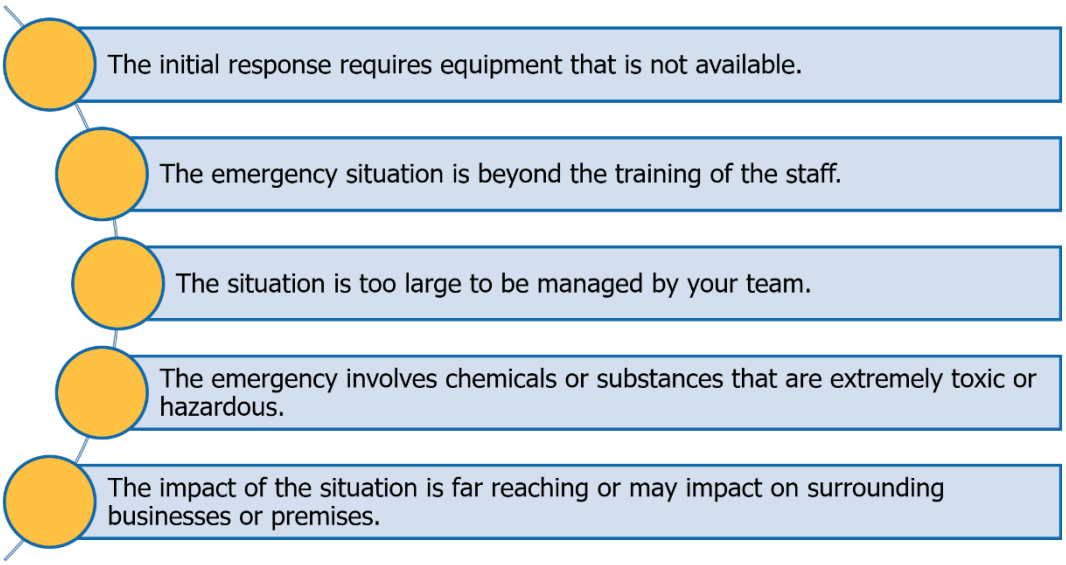
2.3 Determine Appropriateness of Initial Response Actions

While it is essential to have a working knowledge of the required initial response actions as outlined in organisational procedures, it is also important to know what to do if you feel initial response actions are unsafe or inappropriate.

If in doubt, it is best to pull back and obtain additional assistance either from within your organisation or from emergency services.

2.3.1 Unsafe/Inappropriate Responses

In some cases it may be unsafe or inappropriate to follow your workplace initial response procedures. These could be situations where:



As stated above, if you believe the initial response is beyond your training, experience, skills, equipment or abilities, you should consider calling for additional assistance, either from other team members or from external emergency services.

3.1 Confine the Emergency

Once an emergency situation has been identified, it must be confined to the immediate area in accordance with workplace emergency procedures.

Implementation of these procedures will ensure that the following objectives are achieved:

- The situation is confined and managed.
- People are protected.
- Harm to the environment, equipment and resources is minimised.
- The impact area is reduced.

3.1.1 Emergency Confinement Measures and Facilities

The measures selected for confinement of the affected area will depend upon such factors as:

- The nature of the emergency.
- The resources available.
- The training of the personnel involved.

An emergency can be confined through the use of:

Barricades and Signs

Used to stop people used to stop people from entering or leaving the area.

Wardens

Emergency control team members who are able to stop people entering or leaving the area.

Bunding

Portable booms used to confine liquids to a designated area or to exclude fluids from areas such as drains.

Absorbent Materials

These can be placed onto chemical or fuel spills to absorb the liquids.

There may also be items or facilities in the area that could be used to confine the emergency in addition to or instead of regular, prescribed resources where appropriate. These could include:

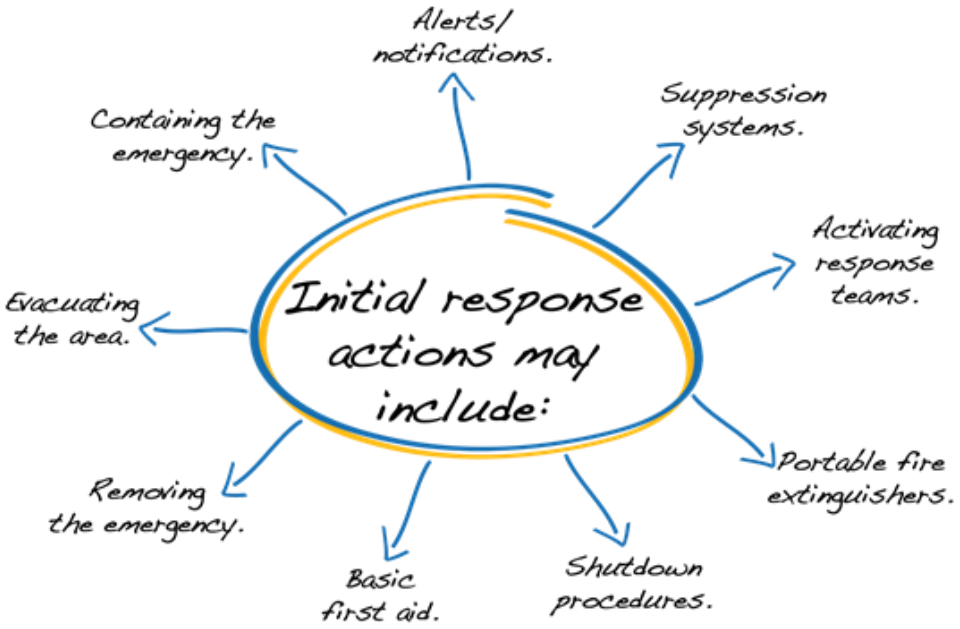
- Furniture, which could be used as barricades to either prevent entry to an area or to confine the spread of an incident.
- Doors and windows, which could be closed to prevent the spread of a fire, or opened to ventilate an area where noxious or hazardous fumes have developed.
- Any item within a workplace that could be used to confine the spread of an incident, if it will do so safely and it is all that is available.

Any action you take that is outside of your workplace procedures for confining an emergency will need to be fully documented. This will include:

- Why you used additional facilities outside of prescribed resources.
- Why prescribed substances or equipment were not available.
- The effects on the incident – did the substance/facility make things better, worse or have no impact.
- How you managed the effect on the incident.
- Any other information that could be needed.

3.2 Initial Response Actions

Initial response actions as outlined in your workplace emergency procedures may include:



3.2.1 Activating Response Teams

These are specialist teams from within the organisation that have additional training to respond to particular emergencies or incidents, e.g. a mines rescue team.

3.2.2 Suppression Systems

Suppression systems may be activated to contain the emergency or at least slow its spread until additional assistance is able to arrive. These can sometimes be referred to as containment systems.

3.2.3 Alerts/Notifications

By informing others of the situation you are able to receive assistance quickly and ensure workplace personnel know what is happening, allowing for further actions if required.

These notifications could be internal to the organisation (alerting emergency control teams or wardens) or external (to emergency services).

3.2.4 Containing the Emergency

This can be done through the use of barricades to keep the situation in one area. Other methods such as closing doors, activating sprinklers or blocking access may also be used.

3.2.5 Evacuating the Area

When evacuating an area, i.e. removing people from danger, you need to designate where the people are to assemble. Once an evacuation has commenced, it is necessary to check and double check that no one has been left behind.

3.2.6 Removing the Emergency

In some situations it is possible to remove the trigger event, therefore removing the emergency. An example could be a leaky fluid or gas container, which can be safely picked up and taken outside for disposal.

3.2.7 Basic First Aid

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First aid is the initial treatment given to a person who has become ill or been injured. Your workplace may have a designated first aid officer or someone with basic training who can keep the casualty alive until qualified medical treatment is available.

3.2.8 Shutdown Procedures

Shutdown procedures are used to stop equipment and processes in the event of an emergency.

This can prevent a hazard from spreading further into the workplace as well as allowing time for evacuation of personnel if required. It can also minimise the financial impact on an organisation.

3.2.9 Portable Fire Extinguishers

Every workplace will have some form of fire extinguishing equipment, including portable fire extinguishers, fire blankets or hose reels.

3.3 Apply Emergency Resources and Equipment

When responding to emergencies, it is important for individuals to have the ability to apply procedures and effectively operate equipment.

3.3.1 Use of Emergency Resources by Individuals

When responding to emergencies, it is important for individuals to have the ability to apply procedures and effectively operate equipment. Individuals may be limited in their skills or knowledge by such factors as:

- Not knowing what is expected of them in the different anticipated emergencies.
- Inability to use the resources or facilities provided to manage emergencies.
- Being unsure how to apply workplace emergency procedures.
- Insufficient knowledge of the relevant legislation for the types of emergencies.
- Insufficient qualifications in using items of equipment according to regulations, e.g. licences, tickets or certificates of competency.
- Difficulties in communicating with others in the emergency management team.

To enhance each person's effectiveness within the team, thorough training in all of the above aspects is essential.

Regular appraisals and refresher courses or practice sessions will also improve individual skill levels.

3.3.1.1 Implications of Incorrect Use

Individual limitations could result in unintended consequences such as:

- **Using the wrong type of fire extinguisher** – this could make the fire worse, hotter or more spread out. As a result, you could be injured or the fire department may be required to attend.
- **Using the wrong item from the first aid kit** – this could result in further injury to the casualty or could cause a fatality in the case of the person being allergic to a substance.
- **Using the wrong procedure** – this could mean that you use information that puts you or others at a heightened risk of injury or peril.

The appropriate training will ensure that resources are not misused and workplace emergency procedures are not applied incorrectly. This will improve the performance of the team involved in confining the emergency situation and will prevent further damage or injury.

3.3.2 Use Emergency Resources Safely

Any emergency resource for confining a situation should be used in a manner that promotes or enhances safe working conditions, both for emergency response personnel and for other people in the immediate area.

Remember that while emergency situations and the responses required are many and varied, your priorities, as outlined in the hierarchy of responsibility, will always be:

1. Protection of life.
2. Minimisation of harm.
3. Prevention of spread.

When using emergency resources your workplace procedures will require you to observe safe work practices.

These are methods that must be used to make sure tasks are carried out as safely as possible. They are governed by legislative requirements and workplace emergency procedures, including:

- Risk assessment and management.
- Safe operating procedures and techniques.
- General requirements for use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).
- Observation of Occupational Health & Safety/Work Health & Safety (OHS/WHS) policies and procedures – OHS/WHS requirements and procedures are those systems that are designed to keep each person in the workplace safe. They cover all aspects of the site from the PPE through to instructions for work activities and operating all equipment and resources with safety.

3.3.2.1 Safe Operating Procedures and Techniques

As part of the emergency control team it is essential that you know how to use all equipment and resources correctly and safely.

Techniques for the safe operation of equipment and resources will be outlined in your organisation's procedures.

Documentation may include operator's manuals as well as manufacturer's specifications and guidelines.

Read all documentation that applies to the resources you are using and ensure you are familiar with how to manage any common problems that may be associated with them.

Speaking with team members or team leaders who have used the equipment before will help you identify any potential issues or concerns.

Your workplace emergency procedures should also include Safe Operating Procedures (SOPs).

These are written documents that are used to prevent incidents occurring when completing a task by:

- Outlining the correct procedures that should be used to complete the task.
- Outlining any corrective action that needs to be taken in the event of something going wrong.

3.3.2.2 Personal Protective Equipment

PPE is the equipment provided to keep you safe and to minimise the hazards within the emergency area.

PPE is the last line of defence for protecting the individual from workplace hazards but will only be effective if it is worn correctly and is adjusted to fit the individual.

Common PPE includes:

- **Eye protection** – goggles, sunglasses, visors.
- **Clothing** – high visibility, protective, full body clothing, safety vests.
- **Head** – hard hats/helmets, sun hats.
- **Hearing protection** – earmuffs, earplugs.
- **Face** – face shield, respiratory protection, dust mask.
- **Hand protection** – gloves, mitts.
- **Foot protec**tion – fully enclosed boots, steel-capped boots.
- **Any other task-specific protective equipment**.

Care and maintenance of equipment and clothing is essential for preserving their protective qualities.

You will need to keep the equipment out of direct sunlight. It will also need to be regularly inspected for any signs of damage, wear, tear or aging which will affect the suitability or safety properties of each item.

3.3.3 Check Initial Response Equipment

Initial response equipment must be checked on a regular basis to ensure it is serviceable when it is needed.

The equipment should also be checked after every use.

The scheduled checks prior to use will involve a comprehensive assessment to ensure each item is still able to perform according to the needs of the organisation.

Checking the initial response equipment before using it will ensure that it is safe and effective.

Using the wrong equipment may exacerbate a particular situation, or you may be risking injuring yourself or others with equipment that is not in working order.

Always take the time to check the equipment. If you are asked to undertake maintenance or scheduled checks on the equipment, ensure you do it thoroughly, in accordance with workplace procedures.

These checks will need to be done in accordance with:

- Relevant standards.
- Manufacturers'/Company instructions.
- Workplace procedures.

Relevant Standards

Standards – for example Australian Standards – will detail which equipment is recommended for a variety of emergency situations and how that equipment should be checked and maintained.

Manufacturers'/Company Instructions

Each item will have specific instructions on how to check that it will function correctly. These may involve simply ensuring the selected equipment is appropriate for the type of emergency or more detailed checklists on specific components and functions may be included.

Workplace Procedures

These will normally include written instructions and details about the pre-use checks for the equipment that is used.

Procedures will generally incorporate the manufacturers' specifications and requirements, as well as relevant standards, and should be regularly used during training.

3.3.4 Select Appropriate Initial Response Equipment

Selecting and using the appropriate initial response equipment, in line with workplace and emergency situation requirements, is an important key to a successful outcome.

Workplace procedures will define the types of emergency most likely to occur within or near the premises, as well as the appropriate responses. Naturally, the type of emergency will dictate the selection of equipment.

Some examples could include:

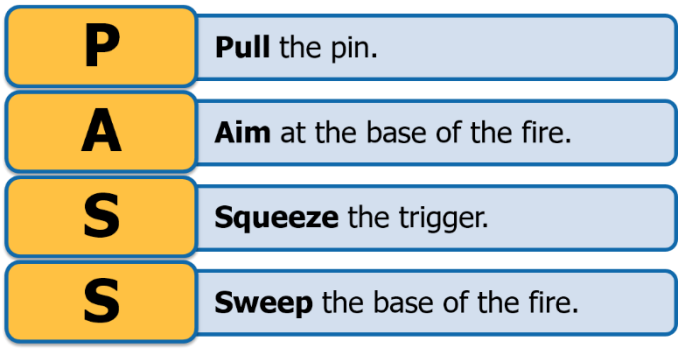
- Fire fighting equipment.
- Spill kit.
- First aid supplies.
- Communications equipment.

3.3.4.1 Fire Fighting Equipment

Fire fighting equipment includes portable fire extinguishers, fire blankets and hose reels.

Fire extinguishers must be appropriate for the type of fire (Classes A to F). Class D fires require special equipment.

To use a fire extinguisher you will need to use the PASS system:



This will extinguish the fire by excluding oxygen from the flames.

Portable fire extinguishers are defined by colour:

= Suitable = Limited Effect = Do Not Use	Type of Fire					
	Class A	Class B	Class C	Class D	Class E	Class F
	Wood, Paper, Plastic Etc.	Flammable & Combustible Liquids	Flammable Gases	Combustible Metal Fires	Electrically Energised Equipment	Cooking Oils And Fats
Type of Extinguisher or Equipment						
Water 	✓	✗	✗	See Note Below	✗	✗
Foam 	✓	✓	✗		✗	O
Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) 	O	O	✗		✓	✗
Powder AB(E) 	✓	✓	✓		✓	✗
Powder BE 	✗	✓	✓		✓	✓
Wet Chemical 	✓	✗	✗		✗	✓
Vaporising Liquid 	✓	O	O		✓	✗
Fire Blanket 	✗	✗	✗		✗	✓
Fire Hose Reel 	✓	✗	✗		✗	✗

Note: Specific, special purpose powder extinguishers are available for Class D metal fires. **Seek Expert Advice.**

3.3.4.2 Spill Kit

When an emergency spill of oil, fuels or chemicals occurs, the initial response – and the most crucial step – is to deploy the spill kit.

It only takes seconds for a spill to spread through a workplace or into stormwater drains.

Without adequate training, a small incident can become a dangerous and expensive situation.

The contents of a spill kit are as follows:

PPE including:

- Safety glasses – the type that fit over prescription glasses is preferable.
- Chemical resistant gloves – disposable nitrile gloves.
- Heavy duty gloves.
- Dust mask – for sweeping up spilt powders.
- Disposable plastic apron.

Spill Equipment including:

- Sand/peat sorb/pearlite/kitty litter – used to dam the spill to prevent spreading.
- Sodium carbonate – used to neutralise acid spills (bicarbonate of soda is also suitable).
- Vinegar – used to neutralise base spills.
- Large strong plastic bag – to dispose of all consumable items used to mop up the spill, i.e. apron, gloves, paper towel.
- Chemical absorbent pads or paper towel – used to mop up flammable liquids.
- Dust pan and brush.
- Buckets – usually at least two are required.

Your spill kit should be clearly marked, signposted and easily accessible to everyone. Don't forget to replenish used material according to workplace emergency procedures.

3.3.4.3 First Aid Supplies

The designated first aid officer, if available, will administer initial care and treatment using the appropriate equipment. If possible, other personnel should also be trained in the basics of first aid, even if it simply means applying the R.I.C.E.R method where appropriate:

- **R**est.
- **I**ce.
- **C**ompression.
- **E**levation.
- **R**eferral.

Be aware that the selection of the incorrect or insufficient first aid equipment could result in further injury or death so care must be taken when administering aid.

3.3.5 Communications Equipment

It is essential that communications equipment is used appropriately during the initial response and throughout the entire emergency.

Unclear or inoperative communications equipment could hinder initial response actions.

Faulty alarms or radios could mean instructions are not heard by people in the danger area, thus increasing the risk of injury, or worse.

If explosions are occurring within close range it may be impossible to hear mobile phones or landlines.

Computer systems may close down so email messages will not be received or sent.

The appropriate communications equipment and its uses during the initial response will be outlined in workplace emergency procedures.

3.3.6 Use Initial Response Equipment

Initial response equipment must be used in accordance with accepted safe practices and training.

Every item of initial response equipment has limitations depending on its specific design and function.

Initial response equipment is intended for short duration use and often has a smaller capacity than equipment designed for use over many hours or incidents. The equipment will often require replacement or replenishment after each use.

Safe work practices for initial response equipment include:

- Knowledge of the limitations of the equipment, as detailed in the operator's manual.
- Following directions/instructions for use of the equipment.
- Wearing the PPE required for use with the equipment.
- Observing the operational capacity of the equipment.

3.3.6.1 Training

Regular training in the use of the equipment will enable you to develop and maintain safe working practices for each item.

Familiarity is essential. You must be comfortable and confident using the initial response equipment in training settings, before attempting to use it during an emergency incident when you will be bombarded with information and issues requiring your attention.

If the workplace contains chemicals or other hazardous substances, a spill clean-up plan is recommended. All personnel should be regularly trained in the use of the spill kit including locating emergency equipment and how to use it.

Spill response training should examine the need for correct spill response (i.e. identifying the type of chemical or substance and the appropriate containment measures), the legal obligations for staff involved and the steps needed to minimise the negative effects of a spill on staff, the workplace and the environment.

3.3.7 Use of Equipment in Coordination with Other Actions

Initial response activities are rarely undertaken by one person working alone. Most often it is a team of people working together to confine the workplace emergency.

Coordination of activities and equipment is therefore essential to ensure the best use of the available resources and personnel. This goes hand in hand with effective communication.

3.3.7.1 Coordinate First Response Actions and Equipment

Coordination could include:

Activity	Description
Using Different Pieces of Equipment	It is not practical for everyone in the emergency response team to be trying to use the same piece of equipment. Applying a variety of equipment could result in a faster containment of the incident.
Doing Different Tasks	To make better use of resources and time, each team member carries out their allocated task using one piece of equipment, e.g. One person uses the fire extinguisher while another evacuates an area.
Same Action from Different Directions	If sufficient resources are available, the incident could be controlled by team members carrying out the same response action with the same type of equipment from different directions.

The coordination of actions and equipment will need to be determined before an incident as part of the emergency planning for your workplace.

Training in initial emergency response should focus on coordination of efforts, actions and equipment to ensure your team is able to function as a team. This will also allow you to determine people's natural aptitude for a variety of tasks.

Some people will naturally be more confident and comfortable working with equipment, while others will show a greater aptitude for dealing with people.

Discovering these aptitudes within your team members can be invaluable for successful operations in responding to and confining an emergency.

3.3.7.2 Communication

One of the keys to effective initial responses is clear communication. It will allow all personnel involved in the emergency to be aware of what has happened, how the current situation is unfolding, and what needs to happen next to control the situation.

Communication can be verbal (spoken), non-verbal (body language or written) and can be delivered through training events, policies, procedures or meetings.

3.3.7.3 Verbal Communication

Effective communication will be delivered in a clear manner that is not overly emotional, as follows:

- Yelling in an emergency situation will lead to panicked response who are easily upset.
- The tone of voice will be calm.
- The level of the voice will be loud enough to be heard without yelling.

3.3.7.4 Body Language

Every member of the emergency response team needs to be aware that their speech and body language will instil either confidence or fear in others in the workplace.

It is essential to remain calm and project controlled confidence in your ability and the abilities of the others in your team.

This will ensure the personnel you are working with stay calm and follow the instructions and procedures for dealing with the emergency.

3.3.7.5 Clear Instructions

Everyone in the emergency management team needs to understand the importance of giving clear instructions that cannot be misinterpreted. The ability to listen carefully and ask clarifying questions when following instructions is also important.

Clear, unambiguous instructions involve direct statements and requests detailing exactly what is required. An example of a clear instruction would be, “Charles, please evacuate all staff members from section B to evacuation point A”.

In contrast an instruction such as, “Charles, get everything out of the sections” is too vague. It is not clear who or what is to be removed and where they should go.

At all times, keep the communications clear, simple, direct and “just in time”. “Just in time” communications require you to give enough information when it is needed, without giving so many instructions that the listener is overwhelmed or unable to remember what to do.

One form of “just in time” communications can be written procedures (non-verbal), allowing the reader to access the required information as it is needed.

3.3.7.6 Updates

Having identified the particular risks and developed plans for responding to those risks, it is necessary to inform the other team members through the appropriate channels.

Once an incident or emergency has occurred, circumstances may change and another risk assessment may need to be conducted to ensure the planned initial response is going to be safe and effective.

This new plan will also have to be communicated to the relevant personnel.

3.4 Document and Report Emergency Response

After the emergency response is completed, it is essential to document the actions that were taken and the resources used.

Workplace emergency procedures will detail how this is to be done.

3.4.1 Emergency Response Documents

Documents could include action logs, diary entries, activity reports and situation reports but all should have complete details of the emergency and the actions taken to control or confine the emergency.

Emergency response documentation will ensure that:

- Equipment is restored to service.
- Incident investigations are initiated.
- Details of emergencies are recorded.
- Follow-up action is reported.
- Team members conduct a review of their own actions/performance appraisal.
- Initial response equipment or procedures are upgraded if necessary.

Emergency response reports can be used to improve the initial response performance of the team by:

- Streamlining procedures.
- Identifying training opportunities in the use of equipment.
- Identifying areas for improvement in the overall response.

3.5 Check, Maintain and Report Use of Emergency Response Equipment

Initial response equipment must be appropriately marked or positioned once it has been used.

In accordance with workplace procedures, documentation also needs to be completed for all initial response equipment that was used during the emergency.

3.5.1 Mark Equipment and Report Servicing or Replacement

Depending on the item and the workplace procedures, marking or positioning may include:

Action	Description
Correctly Disposing of Contaminated Spill Absorbent	In hazardous materials bins or other appropriate containers.
Labelling/Tagging	To indicate items that may have been used or partially used and need refilling or replacing. Labels or tags may also show that equipment is faulty or not functioning at all.
Laying Extinguishers on their Side	This positioning indicates that fire extinguishers should not be used as servicing or replacement is required.
Not Replacing Extinguishers on Hooks	This positioning also shows that extinguishers have been used and/or need to be checked for some reason.
Replenishing Equipment	May involve a checklist for restocking the first aid kit, or a requisition form to replace materials used in the chemical spill kit.

3.5.1.1 Report and Re-Stow Equipment

Once the initial response equipment and resources have been positioned or marked as being used, it is necessary to report the status of the equipment to the relevant personnel as outlined previously.

Reporting is particularly important to ensure equipment is promptly serviced, replenished or replaced and made ready for the next emergency response.

The supervisor or other relevant personnel will then indicate whether initial response equipment and resources are ready to be re-stowed in the appropriate location as stated in workplace emergency procedures.

Equipment must not be re-stowed unless it is fully operational.

3.5.2 Document and Report Use of Emergency Response Equipment

Each organisation will have its own in-house system for documenting and reporting the usage of initial response equipment but the following items are commonly used:

- Checklists.
- Usage or activity logs.
- Maintenance or restocking requests.
- Incident forms.

These documents are submitted to the appropriate person who will decide whether equipment needs to be restocked, maintained or replaced. As outlined in your workplace emergency procedures, this person could be:

- A supervisor.
- A member of the emergency control organisation.
- A member of the emergency planning committee.
- The workplace OHS/WHS officer.