
Unit 6: Reassessing Your Readiness: Post-Incident Activities

Objective

At the end of this unit, the students should be able to describe the activities that need to take place following a deployment.

Scope

- Introduction and Unit Overview
 - Post-Incident Activities
 - Restoring Capabilities: Personnel
 - Restoring Capabilities: Equipment and Supplies
 - Reimbursement
 - Documentation
 - Learning From Experience
 - Capturing Your Experience
 - Learning From Others
 - Discussion: Learning From Others
 - Summary and Transition
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Methodology

After introducing the unit objective, the Instructor will describe the four categories of post-incident activities and engage the students in a discussion of the activities required in each category. Then, the Instructor will stress the importance of learning from one's own experience as well as from the experiences of others, suggesting that the after-action process take place in a non-threatening environment, involve personnel from all agencies that were involved in the response, and result in a concrete plan for implementing lessons learned.

At the end of this unit, the Instructor will facilitate a group discussion of the major resource management lessons learned that the students have captured from recent response activities. He or she will ask followup questions to determine how the students documented lessons learned and tracked progress toward established goals.

At the end of this unit, the Instructor will summarize the key points from this lesson and transition to the tabletop exercise.

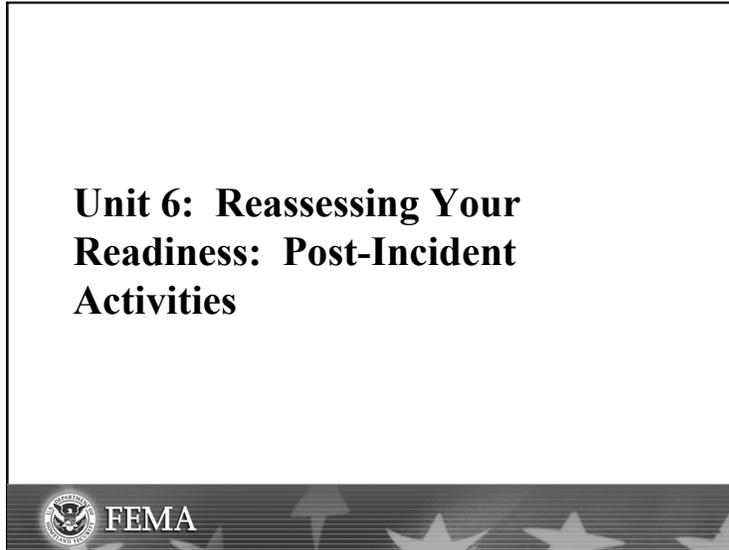
Time Plan

A suggested time plan for this unit is shown below. More or less time may be required, based on the experience level of the group.

Topic	Time
Introduction and Unit Overview	5 minutes
Post-Incident Activities	25 minutes
Learning From Experience	10 minutes
Learning From Others	5 minutes
Discussion: Learning From Others	10 minutes
Summary and Transition	5 minutes
Total Time	1 hour



Visual 6.1



Visual Description: Unit 6: Reassessing Your Readiness: Post-Incident Activities

Instructor Notes

Introduce this unit by telling the students that previous units discussed resource management in planning and preparedness, response, and Incidents of National Significance.



Visual 6.2

Unit 6: Objective

Describe the activities that need to take place following a deployment.



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Visual Description: Unit 6 Objective

Instructor Notes

At the end of this unit, the students should be able to describe the activities that need to take place following a deployment.



Visual 6.3

Post-Incident Activities

Four general categories:

- **Actions needed to return the organization to pre-incident readiness**
- **Actions needed to return equipment and supplies to pre-incident status**
- **Activities and documentation required for reimbursement**
- **Activities to assess the response and capture lessons learned**



Visual Description: Post-Incident Activities

Instructor Notes

Tell the students that the activities that need to take place following a deployment fall into four general areas:

- Actions needed to return the organization to its pre-incident readiness status
- Actions needed to return the equipment and supplies (including servicing, maintenance, repairs, restocking, etc.) to pre-incident readiness status
- Activities and documentation required for reimbursement
- Activities required to assess the response and capture lessons learned



Visual 6.4

Restoring Capabilities: Personnel

Long-term personnel issues may include:

- On-scene and long-term stress management.
- On-scene medical debriefings and long-term medical followup.
- The need to recruit, screen, and hire workers.
- Unforeseen demands on finances.
- Additional training needs.
- Recognition programs or awards for excellence.



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Visual Description: Restoring Capabilities: Personnel

Instructor Notes

Tell the group that personnel issues range from the need for simple rest and fluid replacement and rehabilitation to replacing a significant part of the workforce, as was the case in New York City following the September 11, 2001, attacks on the World Trade Center.

In extreme cases, personnel consequences may verge on the catastrophic. It is not unusual for jurisdictions to experience a higher than normal retirement or resignation rate following a disaster. A higher than usual number of personnel may also require retirement or reassignment for medical or psychological disabilities.

The New York City Fire Department, which experienced the on-duty deaths of a significant number of its emergency responders and Command Staff at the World Trade Center, found itself contemplating the need to recruit, screen, and train a large number of new firefighters, as well as holding promotional assessments to replace department managers.

Stress that some issues have a long-term effect on the jurisdiction's finances, preparedness, and morale. Personnel issues may include:

- On-scene stress management defusing and long-term stress management debriefings and counseling.
- On-scene medical debriefings and long-term medical followup.
- The need to recruit, screen, and hire temporary and permanent workers.
- Unforeseen demands on jurisdiction finances to fund medical, leave, and pension funds.
- Additional training and supervision needed to address substandard performance.
- Recognition programs or awards for excellence, performance above and beyond the call of duty, etc.



Visual 6.5

Restoring Capabilities: Equipment/Supplies

Long-term activities may include:

- Replacing lost, stolen, or damaged equipment.
- Re-outfitting supply caches and response kits.
- Dealing with sensitive property items.
- Investigating and documenting property loss.



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Visual Description: Restoring Capabilities: Equipment/Supplies

Instructor Notes

Point out that restoring response capabilities following a major disaster requires attention to both equipment and supplies.

Restocking and rehabilitating emergency resources after deployment is critical to returning the organization to its pre-incident level of readiness. For equipment and supplies, these activities may include:

- Replacing lost, stolen, or damaged equipment.
- Re-outfitting supply caches and response kits, including refurbishing, decontamination, updating, etc.
- Dealing with sensitive property items.
- Investigating and documenting property loss.



Visual 6.6

Reimbursement

- Reimbursement includes both accounts payable and accounts receivable.
- Response expenses may be reimbursable under several scenarios, including:
 - Reimbursement from the State.
 - Reimbursement from responsible parties.



Visual Description: Reimbursement

Instructor Notes

Emphasize that jurisdictions must ensure that processes and procedures are in place to ensure that resource providers are reimbursed in a timely manner. Procedures must include mechanisms for collecting bills, validating costs against the scope of the work, and ensuring that proper authorities are involved.

Managers must also have a thorough understanding of various reimbursement programs that may be available at the State level or locally. Response expenses may be reimbursable under several scenarios:

- Some States have reimbursement programs that shift costs from participating jurisdictions to the State for certain kinds and levels of incidents. Planners should review these programs to be sure they understand what is reimbursable and what documentation is required.
- Some jurisdictions have ordinances that allow them to recoup response costs under certain conditions. For example, it may be possible to pursue reimbursement from the responsible party at a hazardous materials incident. Planners should review ordinances to be sure they understand what is reimbursable, and what action is required to process a claim.



Visual 6.7

The Stafford Act (1 of 2)

Costs that may be reimbursable in Presidentially declared disasters:

- Debris/wreckage clearance
- Protective measures
- Road systems
- Water control facilities



Visual Description: The Stafford Act (1 of 2)

Instructor Notes

Tell the group that under the Stafford Act, certain response costs are reimbursed for Presidentially declared disasters. While it is beyond the scope of this course to discuss Stafford Act reimbursements in detail, generally reimbursement is possible (under certain conditions) in the following categories:

- Debris/wreckage clearance: This category of assistance includes clearance on public or private land or public waterways; demolition and removal of public or private buildings; cleaning reservoirs, catch basins, streams, and drainage facilities; and clearance to rough grading. Debris removal in the public interest must be approved by the State/Federal Coordinating Officer to be eligible for assistance.
- Protective measures: Protective measures may include overtime related to the disaster, costs associated with mutual aid (such as callback coverage), inventory replacement, mitigation of health hazards, vector control, emergency hiring, flood and fire control efforts, communications and dispatch, and food.
- Road systems: Reimbursable road system work may include emergency detours or bypass roads; public and nonpublic road and bridge repair; repair or replacement of manholes, curbs, culverts, public sidewalks/boardwalks; and repair or replacement of road or street signs and other traffic control devices.
- Water control facilities.



Visual 6.8

The Stafford Act (2 of 2)

Costs that may be reimbursable in Presidentially declared disasters:

- Public buildings and equipment
- Public utilities
- Facilities under construction
- Private nonprofit facilities



Visual Description: The Stafford Act (2 of 2)

Instructor Notes

Continue telling the students the categories under which their jurisdictions may receive reimbursement.

- Public buildings and equipment: Reimbursement under this category may include replacement or repair of fire, law enforcement, or public works vehicles or equipment; roof and window repair or replacement; electrical, communications, or data processing equipment repair or replacement; temporary storage; replacement of office supplies, stores, shop stock, books, and publications; and rental of temporary office space.
- Public utilities: Reimbursement for public utility repair may include inspection, cleaning and repair of sewer and water lines, pumps, and hydrants.
- Facilities under construction.
- Private nonprofit facilities.

Under certain conditions other facilities, equipment, or systems may qualify for reimbursement under the Stafford Act.

Note: Recommend that the students check with their State Training Officers for information about training that is available to address Stafford Act programs.



Visual 6.9

Documentation for Reimbursement

1. Document!
2. Document!
3. DOCUMENT!



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Visual Description: Documentation for Reimbursement

Instructor Notes

Extensive documentation is required for reimbursement under the Stafford Act. FEMA accepts records in a number of formats; however, any tracking system for reimbursement should be able to:

- Distinguish between straight time and overtime hours by department.
- Document:
 - Contract or mutual-aid equipment and personnel costs.
 - Damage to jurisdiction facilities, infrastructure, equipment, or vehicles.
 - Expenses for supplies.
 - Expenses for food.
 - Expenses for renting facilities.
- Identify the specific location of work.
- Identify the eligible category and activities for Federal reimbursement.



Visual 6.10

Capturing Lessons Learned

Capture for:

- Historical and training purposes.
- Revisions and corrections to plans and procedures.
- Support for budget requests to replace, repair, upgrade, or purchase new equipment.



Visual Description: Capturing Lessons Learned

Instructor Notes

Introduce this topic by telling the students that the old adage that experience is the best teacher applies to emergency management as well as the rest of life. The best-designed training and exercise programs cannot compete with the experience of actually implementing plans and procedures and responding during a disaster. Because, fortunately, such events are a rarity, it is critical that lessons learned be captured for:

- Historical and training purposes.
- Revisions and corrections to plans and procedures.
- Support for budget requests to replace, repair, upgrade, or purchase new equipment.



Visual 6.11

Capturing Your Experience (1 of 2)

- The review process must be:
 - Thorough.
 - Honest.
 - Transparent.
- All agencies involved in the response should be involved in after-action activities.



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Visual Description: Capturing Your Experience (1 of 2)

Instructor Notes

Explain that, to capture an accurate and meaningful picture of the response, the review process must be thorough, honest, and transparent. Because major disasters and Incidents of National Significance are, by definition, interagency in scope, so should be the review process. This can mean airing what could be perceived as agency dirty laundry in a public forum. Difficult as this can be, such candor is vital to the review process. Because it can be assumed that no one deliberately sets out to perform poorly, the review philosophy should always be supportive, and have as its base assumption that personnel don't fail the system; the system fails its personnel.



Visual 6.12

Capturing Your Experience (2 of 2)

- Use after-action activities as a basis for:
 - Retraining personnel.
 - Modifying or upgrading systems.
 - Reviewing and updating plans and procedures.
- Develop and follow a concrete plan for implementing recommendations.



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Visual Description: Capturing Your Experience (2 of 2)

Instructor Notes

Tell the students that such a review, especially after a traumatic incident, takes an emotional toll on participants. It is incumbent on managers to make sure that lessons learned result in real change when necessary. Nothing is more demoralizing than going through a traumatic disaster response followed by an equally traumatic review process, only to see recommendations ignored by management. This may include:

- Retraining personnel.
- Modifying or upgrading systems.
- Reviewing and updating plans and protocols.

Management should be prepared to develop and present a concrete plan for implementation of those recommendations that cannot be implemented immediately. The plan should include a tracking mechanism to assign responsibility for completing the action and identifying progress toward each identified performance goal.



Visual 6.13

After-Action Reviews

Document the answers to four questions:

1. What was planned?
2. What actually happened?
3. Why did it happen?
4. What can be done better next time?



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Visual Description: After-Action Reviews

Instructor Notes

Point out that there are many formats for post-incident analysis. A simple format that is easy to adapt to any kind of review (incident, event, or exercise) is the After-Action Review (AAR) process. An AAR is a learning tool intended to improve performance by sustaining strengths and correcting weaknesses. An AAR is performed as immediately as possible after the event by the personnel involved. An AAR should encourage input from participants that is focused on four questions:

- What was planned?
- What actually happened?
- Why did it happen?
- What can be done better next time?

It is a tool that can be used to get maximum benefit from the experience gained on any incident or project.



Visual 6.14

Learning From Others

- Meet with responders and managers after they have had time to analyze their experience.
- Contact the Learning Resource Center at EMI to access case-specific lessons learned.



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Visual Description: Learning From Others

Instructor Notes

Remind the group that it is also possible to learn from others. Sometimes it is possible to actually visit the disaster site, but a site visit could cause major problems to an already stressed response organization and may not provide as valuable a learning experience as would be possible if you sat down with responders and managers after they have had a chance to analyze their experiences.

Tell the group that the Learning Resource Center (LRC) at the Emergency Management Institute maintains a large number of case studies that have valuable information for planners. Suggest that the students contact LRC personnel for lessons learned information. They will be happy to help locate appropriate case studies.



Visual 6.15

Discussion: Learning From Others

Share resource-management lessons learned from recent responses.

- How did you document them?
- How did you track progress?



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Visual Description: Discussion: Learning From Others

Instructor Notes

Point out that sharing lessons learned is an important way of improving resource management capabilities. Facilitate a group discussion of the major resource management lessons learned that the students have captured from recent response activities. In addition to the lessons learned, focus on:

- How the students documented lessons learned.
- How they tracked progress toward established goals.



Visual 6.16

Summary and Transition

- Post-incident activities fall into four general categories.
- Resource managers should learn from their own experiences and the experience of others.
- Document, track, and follow up on lessons learned.



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Unit 6:
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Visual Description: Summary and Transition

Instructor Notes

Summarize the key points from this unit:

- Post-incident activities fall into four general categories:
 - Actions needed to return the organization to pre-incident readiness.
 - Actions needed to return equipment and supplies to pre-incident readiness.
 - Activities and documentation required for reimbursement.
 - Activities required to assess the response and capture lessons learned.
- Resource managers should learn from their own experiences and from the experience of others. After-action discussions should involve personnel from all agencies that were involved in the response. The discussion should be honest, thorough, and transparent, yet nonthreatening.
- After-action discussions should be documented in a concrete plan and followed up to track progress toward the stated goals.

Ask if anyone has any questions before continuing.

Transition to the next unit by telling the group that, during Unit 6a, they will participate in a tabletop exercise that will allow them to apply what they have learned in this course.

Notes: