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LESSON LEARNED

Emergency Operations Centers: Protocols for Notifications of Activation

SUMMARY

Emergency operations center (EOC) should possess a protocol for notifying appropriate governmental departments, elected officials, and relevant non-governmental organizations of an activation.

DESCRIPTION

On the morning of November 7, 2007, the motor vessel (M/V) *Cosco Busan*, a 902-foot container ship, struck the base of a Bay Bridge tower in San Francisco Bay, resulting in an oil spill of approximately 53,000 gallons into the bay. Initial reports stated that only 140 gallons of oil had been released. However, reports throughout the day indicated that a much larger spill had occurred. A Unified Command structure was established on November 8, with the California Department of Fish and Game, the US Coast Guard, and a representative of the M/V *Cosco Busan* responsible for planning, managing, and responding to the oil spill.

The M/V *Cosco Busan* accident constituted the largest oil spill in the San Francisco Bay in over two decades and was the first time a ship struck the Bay Bridge.

The City and County of San Francisco (CCSF), California, departments supported response and recovery operations following the spill. CCSF departments developed and implemented a range of measures, including beach cleanup, waterfront protection, wildlife protection, and the management of volunteers.

CCSF partially activated its EOC on November 13, 6 days after the incident occurred. However, no official notification was sent from the EOC to relevant departments informing them that the EOC had been activated. Consequently, several departments remained unaware of the EOC activation and other related information. This caused confusion among CCSF departments and prolonged unnecessary problems in coordinating response efforts. The after-action report (AAR) recommends that "official notification of EOC activation should be sent from the EOC to relevant departments, elected officials, and other involved non-governmental organizations." The AAR notes that the CCSF EOC should review and update, as necessary, its protocol for notification of an EOC activation.

EOCs should possess a protocol for notifying appropriate governmental departments, elected officials, and relevant non-governmental organizations of an activation.

CITATION

City and County of San Francisco. *City and County of San Francisco M/V Cosco Busan Oil Spill After Action Report*. 13 Mar 2008.

<https://www.llis.dhs.gov/docdetails/details.do?contentID=35502>

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