Most simply put, assessing an incident can be described as “knowing what is going on around you”. All too often, emotional reactions, shock and chaos can ensue after an incident and for those individuals responsible for an organization, it is important to maintain awareness and provide regular status updates to those involved.

Documentation of key actions and decisions is critical in a crisis or emergency. The following questions serve as a tool to ensure awareness is maintained throughout an event. Be sure to keep clear, legible notes of your discussions.

**Assessment Outline**

1. What do you know about what has happened?

* What is the source(s) of this information?
* Is it reliable?
* Has it been validated?

2. What are the known impacts on personnel, facilities, operations, and/or other key areas?

3. What immediate action has been taken or needs to be taken?

4. What additional information do you need?

* Where can you source the necessary information?

5. At an organizational level, who needs to be involved in the response?

* Are they already trained?
* Are their roles and responsibilities concerning the incident already defined?

6. What resources are available or may be required?

7. What stakeholders may be impacted?

8. What communication is required?

* Who is the audience?
* Who is responsible for communication?
* How will it be delivered?

9. What is the potential for greater impact?

10. Is there anything else happening in the local area that may impact your organization, people,  
 facilities, and/or operations?

**Worksheet**

The following questions serve as a tool to ensure situational awareness is maintained throughout an event. If your organization is not documenting status updates, it is recommended that at the very least, the following questions should be reviewed at each briefing.

What do you know about what has happened?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Information** | **Source** | **Validated?** |
|  |  | ☐ |
|  |  | ☐ |
|  |  | ☐ |
|  |  | ☐ |
|  |  | ☐ |
|  |  | ☐ |

What additional information do you need?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Desired Information** | **Source** | **Assigned To** |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |
|  |  |  |

What is the impact?

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Current** | **Potential** |
| Personnel |  |  |
| Facilities |  |  |
| Operations |  |  |
| Stakeholders |  |  |
| Vendors/ Suppliers |  |  |
| Other |  |  |

What immediate action has been taken or needs to be taken?

The following process can be done quickly if it is well-directed/managed and will provide you with quality results.

1. Determine what you will be trying to achieve in the short and medium terms once life safety issues have been stabilized. Documenting these strategic goals will provide everyone with focus throughout the recovery process.
2. With the strategic goals in mind, what are your objectives for a particular operational period (i.e., the next \_\_\_ hours or days)?
3. Discuss options for achieving your objectives. Get as many ideas on the table as you can.
4. Select the best and most achievable options. At this point, you will need to be mindful of any associated constraints or obstacles.
5. Document the actions necessary to carry out the selected courses of action.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Task/Activity** | **Person Responsible** | **Status** |
|  |  |  |

At an organizational level, who needs to be involved in the response?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Role** | **Responsibilities** | **Contacted?** |
|  |  |  | ☐ |
|  |  |  | ☐ |
|  |  |  | ☐ |
|  |  |  | ☐ |

What resources do you need?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Personnel** | **Available?** | **Facilities** | **Available?** | **Technology/ Equipment** | **Available?** |
|  | ☐ |  | ☐ |  | ☐ |
|  | ☐ |  | ☐ |  | ☐ |
|  | ☐ |  | ☐ |  | ☐ |

What communication is required?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Who is the audience?** | **What is the message?** | **Who is responsible for delivery?** | **Method of communication** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

Situational awareness is an ongoing process. As the situation develops, use this form to reevaluate the situation and your response.