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Dams Sector Crisis Management Suite

OCTOBER 2021

OVERVIEW

Dams, levees, and related facilities are a vital part of the nation’s infrastructure, providing a wide range of economic, environmental, and social benefits through the delivery of critical water retention and control services. Incidents involving Dams Sector assets could result in severe economic losses, loss of life, and reduced public confidence in industry and government’s ability to provide essential services. Dam owners can enhance the overall resilience of their facilities through the development of a crisis management program inclusive of plans to guide emergency response, crisis communications, rapid restoration, and continuity of operations.

An integrated crisis management approach enhances an organization’s ability to manage incidents with the potential to impact the facility, disrupt operations, affect external stakeholders, degrade the ability to do business, or affect the brand and reputation of the organization. Depending on the complexity of the facility and its operations, an integrated crisis management program includes plans addressing potential crisis situations, while conforming to applicable regulatory requirements, and exercises to test the implementation of the plans.

The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), which serves as the Dams Sector Risk Management Agency, developed the Dams Sector Crisis Management Suite to help owners and operators understand the principles of crisis management and build a crisis management program. The suite includes educational materials, planning templates, and exercise support to test the plans included in the program. This fact sheet provides an overview of resources available to Dams Sector stakeholders through the Dams Sector Crisis Management Suite. All items referenced in this fact sheet can be accessed via the Homeland Security Information Network–Critical Infrastructure (HSIN-CI) Dams Portal.

For questions, contact the Dams Sector Management Team at DamsSector@cisa.dhs.gov.

Click on any icon below to learn more.



What is Crisis Management?

Learn about foundational concepts of crisis management in the Dams Sector



Build a Crisis Management Program

Access a list of templates to draft plans as part of a crisis management program



Exercise Plans in the Crisis Management Program

Access the Dams Sector Tabletop Exercise Toolbox



Access the Crisis Management Suite

Learn about how to access the resources in the Crisis Management Suite

WHAT IS CRISIS MANAGEMENT?

Crisis management is the ability for an organization to manage incidents that have the potential to cause significant impacts. Dams Sector owners and operators have long focused on safety and emergency planning to maintain their dams in a safe manner. An integrated crisis management approach can provide additional value by guiding response, rapid restoration, continuity of operations, and recovery for a broad array of potential scenarios. The Dams Sector Crisis Management Suite includes the following resources on crisis management foundational concepts:

- **Dams Sector Crisis Management Handbook:** Introduces crisis management concepts, explains how crisis management measures are an important component of an overall risk management framework, and highlights guidelines to apply these concepts to dams and related infrastructure.

- **Web-Based Training:** Enables sector stakeholders to learn at their own pace to understand security vulnerabilities in the Dams Sector, risk assessments, protective programs, and incident response capabilities. Three courses are available:
 - **Dams Sector—Crisis Management (IS-870a):** Explains the application of crisis management concepts and planning guidance as integral components of an overall risk management program.
 - **Dams Sector—Security Awareness (IS-871a) (FOUO):** Describes common vulnerabilities, potential indicators of threats, surveillance detection, and reporting of incidents and suspicious activities.
 - **Dams Sector—Protective Measures (IS-872a) (FOUO):** Addresses protective measures related to physical, cyber, and human elements as components of an overall risk management program.

Visit CISA's Dams Sector Resources webpage at www.cisa.gov/dams-sector-resources and the HSIN-CI Dams Portal to access other Dams Sector documents to supplement learning about security and resilience in the Dams Sector.

BUILD A CRISIS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

A crisis management program primarily includes the development of plans addressing potential crisis situations and ensuring that key personnel understand their roles and expected actions. The Dams Sector Crisis Management Suite includes templates for the types of plans listed below. Depending on the type of facility, its purposes, and operational characteristics, as well as risk environment and organizational priorities, some of these plans may not be applicable to a particular organization or could be consolidated as part of a program under a different title.

- **Emergency Action Plans** are formal documents that identify potential emergency conditions at a dam and specify actions to be followed to minimize loss of life and property damage.
- **Hazard-Specific Response Plans** recognize that several types of incidents—including cyber, active shooter, and explosives—escalate quickly and therefore require additional planning specific to the type of hazard.
- **Crisis Communications Plans** enable the organization to proactively establish effective and consistent communication with affected stakeholders by explaining how the organization will handle the crisis.
- **Recovery Plans** are used to help prepare for quick damage repair to at least partially restore project functions as well as long-term repairs to fully restore the project.
- **Continuity Plans** help facilitate the performance of an organization's essential functions during any situation that may disrupt normal operations.

EXERCISE PLANS IN THE CRISIS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

While planning is essential for effective crisis management, more complete preparation requires periodic exercises that test the implementation of these plans. The Dams Sector Crisis Management Suite includes a comprehensive exercise toolbox to maximize the limited resources available for exercise purposes.

- The **Dams Sector Tabletop Exercise Toolbox** offers four scenarios, including active shooter, international adversary, cyber incident (insider threat), and cyber incident (external adversary). Toolbox materials are consistent with the Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP) and include a situation manual with scenario details and proposed discussion questions, briefing slides to guide the discussion, facilitator and evaluation handbook, exercise planner instructions, and feedback forms.

ACCESS THE DAMS SECTOR CRISIS MANAGEMENT SUITE

All resources included in the Dams Sector Crisis Management Suite are accessible via the HSIN-CI Dams Portal, which serves as a primary information-sharing mechanism for vetted Dams Sector partners and stakeholders. To be granted access, submit an email request for HSIN-CI Dams Portal Access to the HSIN-CI mailbox at HSINCI@hq.dhs.gov or to the HSIN-CI Dams Section Program Manager at DamsPortal@hq.dhs.gov. Once access is granted, members have access to critical infrastructure reference documents, exercise and training products, and information about emerging threats and incidents from approved content providers.