



Health and Safety in Transit Depots

Emergency management



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Emergency management is mandatory at a transit depot. You need to take all practicable steps to prevent accidents, including those involving hazardous substances. In addition, you must be prepared to respond if anything goes wrong.

Emergency management will involve analysing what could go wrong, taking preventative measures such as the provision of signs, information, and equipment such as fire extinguishers and secondary containment, and having a response plan in place to deal with emergencies.

The person in charge of a transit depot must ensure these emergency management requirements are met.

Where do I start?

To be prepared for an emergency, you need to know the maximum quantity of each hazard classification that may be held in the transit depot at any time. You also need to know the hazardous properties of each of the substances. Product labels, transport documents, safety data sheets and past records will provide you with the hazardous property and quantity information.

What is required for emergency management?

Risks from hazardous substances are influenced by a combination of the hazardous properties and quantities of the products that are held.

The amount of risk to people, property or the environment determines the extent of preparation required for emergency management.

HSNO separates emergency management preparation into three 'levels'. Each level is in addition to the previous level and requires additional preparation.

Substances in transit that comply with the requirements of Land Transport Rule 45001, Maritime Rule 24A or Civil Aviation Rule 92 will meet Level 1 and 2 emergency management.

Level 1 – *Labelling:*

Every container that holds a hazardous substance needs to be properly labelled. The label tells you about the product in the container and its hazards.

Where hazardous substances are enclosed in a bulk transport container, information that complies with the various transport rules is sufficient if it is available to the people near the container at all times.

Labels need to inform people of the steps they need to take to avoid incidents, and the actions to take in an emergency. In an emergency at a transit depot, it might not be practical to read the advice given on the label, as often the label and its content will not be visible. A higher degree of caution is therefore required.

Level 2 – *Safety data sheets:*

You are required to have safety data sheets. These documents tell you how to prepare for emergencies and what to do if one occurs. You need to have a safety data sheet for each of the different products you hold or are likely to hold and these sheets must be readily available to your staff.

Level 2 – *Fire extinguishers:*

Every place where flammable substances are stored may require fire extinguishers. The number will depend on the flammability of the individual substances; the total quantity of each classification present; and being able to have the extinguishers within 30 metres of the flammable substance.

Each extinguisher is required to meet a set standard. A 2 kg dry powder or 30B rated extinguisher will meet the requirements of the legislation. Extinguishers must be regularly inspected.

The New Zealand Standard NZS 4503:2005 for hand operated fire fighting equipment specifies a maximum maintenance period of one year. However, good industry practice dictates more frequent checks.

Transit depots will generally exceed the threshold quantities for requiring fire extinguishers. You should use the maximum quantities likely to be present at any one time when working out how many you need.

For example, when 50 kg of LPG (2.1.1A) or more than 200 litres of petrol (3.1A), or 250 kg of flammable solids (4.1.1A) are present at the transit depot, there must be at least two fire extinguishers. You may require more as the extinguishers have to be within a 30 metre radius of the flammable substance.

You should discuss the types and location of your extinguishers with a fire engineer or your emergency equipment supplier. Building legislation may require additional fire fighting equipment.

Level 3 – *Signage:*

Where large amounts of certain hazardous products are stored, signage is required. Signs must state what the hazards are and what to do in an emergency. For further information, see Brief 6, Labels, safety data sheets and signage.

Level 3 – *Controlling spills:*

Good emergency preparation means having systems in place to contain a spill as well as being prepared for clean-up. If a spill occurs, you will need to safely dispose of any wastes, including the materials used in the clean-up. Staff should be trained to deal with spills, and having a spill kit handy is critical.

Hazardous substances spills must be controlled so there is no release into the environment, waterways or drains. Secondary containment or bunding is a means to achieve this.

The level of secondary containment depends on the total volume of liquid held in the transit depot, the classification of the substance and the size of the containers. As transit depots will contain a range of containers, it will be necessary to determine the likely quantities that may be present at any one time. This calculation may not be straight-forward and it would be prudent to seek advice from a specialist adviser.

Level 3 – *Emergency response plans:*

Transit depots are likely to require an emergency response plan. The plan should be based on the maximum quantities of the hazard classes likely to be held.

Emergency information may be found in the “Dangerous Goods –Initial Emergency Response Guides”, in safety data sheets and other commercial packages. These documents identify the hazards of the substance, and first aid, spill and fire response.

The plan needs to have clearly documented procedures and take into account all potential types of emergency that may arise, for example, fire, spill, release, vehicle accident or injury. The plan must cover:

- personnel responsibilities, who is to be contacted, as well as their contact details;
- emergency services that are expected to respond to a call for assistance and their contact numbers;
- the names of trained staff, their skills and how to contact them;
- actions to limit the emergency;
- actions to warn neighbours, if applicable;
- first aid information;
- emergency prevention equipment such as fire extinguishers, personal protective equipment, spill containment equipment, etc. their location and instructions on use.

Emergency response plans must be clearly understood by all employees and be tested at least annually or more frequently if they are changed. Records of these tests need to be kept for at least two years.

Further information

Information on emergency management will be given on safety data sheets.

A *Quick Guide to Emergency Management* is at: <http://www.ermanz.govt.nz/resources/publications/pdfs/ER-QG-24-1.pdf>

Find out more about *Emergency Management* at: <http://www.ermanz.govt.nz/hs/compliance/emergency.html>

SNZ HB 76:2008 Dangerous Goods –Initial Emergency Response Guide is available from Standards New Zealand see: <http://www.standards.co.nz>

Information is also available from the ERMA New Zealand Hazardous Substances Compliance Line, 0800 376 234, or by emailing hsinfo@ermanz.govt.nz, including a free *Emergency Management Flip Chart*.

