Response Manager

The Response Manager is appointed by the Controller to assist with the management of tasks, the operation of the Coordination Centre, problem-solving and resolving internal conflicts. Provides approvals in the Controllers absence and represents the Controller as delegated.

Response Manager Role Profile: Version 03: 09/09/2019

Incident Level (I)

- Contribute to development of response objectives and Action Plan
- Build knowledge of objectives and Action Plan across the response and align and direct activities towards achieving that
- Build a constructive and positive culture in a difficult and pressured environment, model good leader behaviours and deal with incidents where these are not demonstrated
- Focus on the changes and actions required to get the best from the Local response: “A good RM is not just experienced but also has a feeling for how things are going”
- Brief IMT members and ensure that they understand their role and what they need to do
- Identify where there are capability/experience gaps and provide “just in time” guidance, tactics and advice
- Set and monitor the Centre schedule, ensure information flows are current and effective across all parts of the response, and keep the Controller advised on status and trends
- Deal with a range of issues coming up that do not require a response from the controller (this allows the Controller to maintain a strategic point of view)
- Contribute best practice expertise and technical experience on how the Centre can operate most effectively
- Create connections and linkages to assist functions in doing the work more easily
- Represent the Controller when requested and carry out actions on his/her behalf (e.g. make execution decisions in line with the response objectives and Action Plan, attend Governance meetings, chair IMT, liaise with key external stakeholders)
- Chair IMT in the Controllers absence
- Sign off on SitReps, changes to the Action Plan and response objectives, financial delegations
- Make other key decisions on tasks or use of resources (where continuing the direction that has already been set)
- Maintain an in-depth understanding of what is going on across the functions, keep teams on track, maintain pace and focus on inter-dependencies and deadlines
- Safeguard people’s wellbeing across the Centre, including ensuring managers are taking specific actions to deal with risks or concerns for their teams
- Monitor focus, motivation, engagement, wellness and energy levels and devise ways to lift these
- Manage ad hoc requests and issues up to a Regional level

Local Level (L)

- Make sure each function or team understands its role, the actions required under the AP and how it needs to work in with other functions for maximum effectiveness
- Provide checks and balances across the response – look at decisions/actions and determine the extent to which these are in line with the plan and provide feedback: “this is not what is wanted. This will not achieve the objective”
- Influence and problem-solve on a wide range of issues affecting Centre performance (including resolution of issues identified by the Controller or IMT) and to minimise escalation to the Controller
- Focus on the changes and actions required to get the best from the Regional response
- Manage interdependencies between work streams developing communication and good practices to get the best results
- Increase alignment and coherence of actions across functions through reducing overlaps, gaps and performance issues
- Give tactical advice on problems, drawing on knowledge and experience – ways and means, how to present the issue, workarounds etc.
- “smoothing the way”
- Reset and refocus functional teams as objectives or Action Plans change
- Manage ad hoc requests and issues up to a National level
- Undertake day to day relationship management with Governance and other stakeholders

Regional Level (R)

- Deal with a wide range of escalated problems with considerable latitude and freedom to act on the Controllers behalf
- Focus on the changes and actions required to get the best from the response as whole, including in terms of co-ordination and problem-solving for Local and Regional levels (working with RMs at those levels)
- Understand where issues are beyond the scope, capacity or capability of functions and recommend additional resourcing or other alternatives
- Trouble-shoot on typical organisational issues that emerge (patch protection, boundary management, siloing, role stress)
- Manage random and ad hoc events and issues to remove distraction from functions

National Level (L)

Builds on tasks identified at Local and Regional levels

A larger, complex and/or long-term response at Incident level which required a Response Manager would move into the tasks identified at Local level.
The Response Manager is appointed by the Controller to assist with the management of tasks, the operation of the Coordination Centre, problem-solving and resolving internal conflicts. Provides approvals in the Controllers absence and represents the Controller as delegated.

### Context at Incident Level
- Only at the most complex incidents at Incident level (See Local)

### Context at Local Level
- More demands on the Controller means that this is the point at which a RM is likely to be required
- Context includes local political sensitivities, stakeholder involvement
- Multiple agency and community tensions and issues
- Response Manager is not always part of a response at Local level but should be
- There are often significant experience and capability gaps (this may include the Controller) and this makes the Response Manager role even more critical

### Incident Classification
As responses move up the scale:
- Essentially the Response Manager (RM) role is in place to support the Controller so when nature of Controllers role changes, the same is likely to happen for the RM
- Scalability – as size of team increases and range of functions, the response is more likely to have an RM but the nature of what they do is highly situational so not predictable
- At lower levels there can be more inexperienced people doing the Controller role for the first time, but not really up with the play and the RM is critical here
- As the complexity increases, there is more ambiguity which can trigger different views and conflict with the risk that the response becomes more opinion and less evidence based
- There are more functions and more sub-functions so “span of influence” for the RM expands
- Capability becomes more critical as complexity increases, including leadership capability
- The role becomes more people and performance management, ensuring the response is running effectively and efficiently.
- As complexity increases there are more vested interests in the room, e.g. industry people who are not always socialised in terms of CIMS

### Context at Regional Level
- This is likely to be complex and multisite
- Best practice in how a response is structured and managed becomes more important
- Likely to still involve people without implicit knowledge of how to work together and therefore need constant issues resolution
- Lower level of detail and removed from the Incident level but need to retain “feel” for what is happening on the ground
- Context includes heightened political sensitivities, competing interests and agendas, extended range of stakeholders

### Context at National Level
- There is more latitude and freedom to act – but also higher expectations
- There are more escalated (and more intractable) problems, more pressure and dynamics
- Scope is wider across the entire response
- Strong links with RMs at Regional and Incident levels
- High level of political sensitivity requires confidence in operating in that environment – more diplomacy and tact, good timing, knowing other channels to get things done

### Response Manager Role Profile: Version 03: 09/09/2019
- Inherent high standards for what an effectively run response looks like
- Understands their mandate, accountabilities, response objectives and consequent priorities
- Strong understanding of best practice across and between response functions, particularly the degree of integration of functions required for effective performance
- Ability to move smoothly between the big picture/strategic thinking and immediate/tactical considerations without any difficulty
- Understanding of scalability and flexibility over the different phases of a response
- Ability to develop a “feel” for how things are going, see patterns, dysfunction and disconnects and put solutions into place
- Personal credibility, soft skills, diplomacy, mediation, negotiation and ability to influence where there is resistance – getting solutions acted on
- Engaging people, building connections and relationships for coherence and alignment – managing disconnects
- Building capability, providing guidance and support, and dealing with performance issues
- Conscious of timeframes, deadlines and deliverables, operational schedules
- Planning skills, including forecasting, projecting how a scenario might play out, options development
- Ability to accelerate the pace when needed, including making judgments about what can be started (before final decisions are made) and assessing quality “good enough”