

Monitoring location of field personnel

Personnel operating in emergency response situations may be required to undertake field activities in environments and locations that are unfamiliar and isolated (by time and distance). This may pose a higher level of risk to their health, safety and well-being than normal work environments.

Personnel must be monitored regularly and systemically to ensure their health, safety and well-being is not adversely affected. Action must be taken if any adverse effects of the field activities are identified.

Risks

Field activity risks must be assessed and should account for (as a minimum) fatigue, working environment (hot, cold), task(s) being conducted, locality, isolation, communication access, [medical plan](#) information, team size and experience of personnel.

Refer to the safe work method statements – [property visits](#) and [driving vehicles](#).

Resources

- Communication devices e.g. mobile phone, [satellite phone](#), [GRN radios](#)
- Tracking devices e.g. EPIRB, phone apps
- Personnel records and roster

Establish monitoring systems

Supervisors responsible for field personnel must implement a system for monitoring their location and well-being, and it should include:

- Frequency of monitoring determined by level of risk. For example:
 - Every 30 minutes for high risk activities e.g. bushfire zones
 - 1-4 hours for isolated activities
 - Start/end of shift for routine work
- Method of communication to track and in case of emergency (e.g. phone, messages, radio, satellite tracking)
- Notifying local authorities (e.g. Police, NPWS) in the area of operation
- Activity/site details
- Recording system for contact
- Briefing personnel on requirements

Monitoring personnel

A **designated person** is responsible for maintaining contact with field personnel according to the schedule, keeping the supervisor informed of any non-contacts, and implementing the plan to locate personnel if the contact schedule is not met.

Field personnel are responsible for notifying the designated person of travel details including any changes, maintaining the agreed contact schedule, and maintaining communication devices.

Supervisors must inform line management of any incidents as they occur, ensure they are recorded and ensure personnel are debriefed.

Locating 'missing' field personnel

Complete in order until missing personnel located:

1. Inform the supervisor
2. Continue to maintain an event log
3. Contact all listed communication devices and pathways
4. Request other field personnel to investigate
5. Continually monitor communication devices and pathways
6. Activate critical incident response plan (CIRP).
7. If unsuccessful, contact Police with the following information - name(s) of person(s); appearance description (including uniform); all contact details; vehicle registration and description; last known location and time; activities being undertaken; and any known medical conditions
8. Record time personnel found

Further information

- Department of Industry – online form - Incident notification form (accessed via Intranet or App)
- [Guide – Critical incident response](#)