

Overview

This standard is about anticipating and assessing the risks faced by individuals, communities, and organisations. It includes working collaboratively to understand these risks and ensuring risk assessments are communicated effectively to inform resilience activities. It enables professionals to apply appropriate risk assessment methods, manage their limitations, and be accountable for the quality and accuracy of the information they provide. This standard ensures that risk assessments are used to inform decision-making and improve preparedness, response, and recovery planning.

Aimed at those responsible for risk identification, anticipation, assessment, and communication, this standard supports those in resilience and emergency contexts to make informed, evidence-based decisions.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. evaluate and audit risk anticipation, assessment, and monitoring approaches using governance processes
2. define the purpose, scale and scope of risk assessment
3. identify and collaborate with partners and stakeholders in risk assessment and monitoring, updating partnership, engagement and accountability strategies as needed
4. evaluate relevant legislation, duties, sector codes of practice and guidance to identify responsibilities, priorities and approaches
5. gather and evaluate existing risk related information, identifying gaps and limitations
6. evaluate the risk context in which you work
7. ensure risk information is applied in a way that is suited to the context, scale, and sector in which it is used
8. apply appropriate risk anticipation and assessment methods
9. develop evidenced, detailed, and scaled scenarios and profiles for use across the phases of the resilience cycle
10. document the methods, assumptions, and uncertainties in risk anticipation, prioritisation, assessments and monitoring
11. design, implement, and validate risk monitoring systems which meet the needs of the organisation, partners, and stakeholders
12. use suitable reporting, presentation, and communication methods to enable understanding of and action on risk information
13. work within evaluation and accountability mechanisms to ensure risk information is effectively applied in decision-making, policy development, and operational practices
14. evaluate and apply monitoring information to update risk assessments and response readiness, adapting to the dynamic nature of risks
15. establish and apply processes to monitor, review, and improve risk anticipation and assessment processes in line with legislative and organisational standards and lessons identified
16. undertake continuing professional development and share evidence based good and innovative practice in this occupational area

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

1. the concept of risk, associated terms and how they are applied in different sectors
2. legislation, standards, codes of practice, guidance, and models for anticipating, assessing, monitoring, and communicating risks
3. other organisations that assess and manage risks
4. factors influencing the severity of impacts on stakeholders, the environment, infrastructure, and the economy
5. immediate and long-term consequences of emergency impacts and resilience or response actions
6. potential risks to organisations, including financial, reputational, and operational consequences
7. risk owners, stakeholders, and their responsibilities in risk assessment, monitoring, and communication
8. structures for collaborative risk management and communication
9. methods for foresight, anticipation, and sources of information on new and emerging risk
10. the sources, benefits, and limitations of primary and secondary risk information
11. the value of combining tacit and technical knowledge to better understand risks
12. methods for assessing individuals' vulnerability, capabilities and un-met needs
13. methods for assessing risks, including qualitative, quantitative, and dynamic model approaches
14. the role of and approaches to risk monitoring for preparedness, readiness and response
15. types of uncertainty and how to manage and communicate it effectively
16. options for reducing and managing risks
17. application of social and behavioural sciences in understanding and influencing behaviour in risk and emergency contexts
18. benefits and limitations of common approaches to presenting, mapping, and visualising risks across the resilience cycle
19. opportunities available for learning and development in this occupational area
20. the role of reflective practice in evaluating performance, identifying areas for improvement and professional development

Glossary

Risk:

The probability of the outcome of a hazard, threat, or disruptive event being negative for people, systems, assets, or objectives. Risks are greater when vulnerability is higher.

Risk context

The circumstances, conditions, or factors that influence how risks are caused, identified, assessed, and managed, including environmental, social, economic, and political conditions. It involves defining the external (stakeholders, local, national, and international factors) and internal (governance, culture, and capabilities) parameters that shape risk perception and decision-making.

Resilience cycle

A continuous process of preparing for, responding to, recovering from, and adapting to risks and emergencies. Evolving from the Integrated Emergency Management (IEM) Cycle, it reflects the UK's shift from civil contingencies to a broader resilience approach, emphasizing learning and adaptation to drive long-term improvements.

Risk assessment

Analytical Risk Assessment: The systematic process of identifying, analysing, and evaluating risks using structured methods and tools. This approach is conducted when there is sufficient time to gather and evaluate information, often involving both qualitative and quantitative techniques to ensure a comprehensive understanding for decision-making.

Dynamic Risk Assessment: The ongoing assessment of hazards and impacts during incident response. This largely intuitive approach relies on the knowledge and experience of the risk context, adapting to changing conditions in real-time to ensure the safety and effectiveness of response actions.

Risk anticipation

The proactive identification and assessment of emerging risks and trends before they materialize. It focuses on foresight, scenario planning, and predictive analysis to enhance resilience.

Risk monitoring (distinct from anticipation)

The ongoing observation and tracking of known risks to detect changes in likelihood, impact, or severity. It provides real-time data to inform decision-making, usually for warning, readiness and response actions.

Emerging threats

Anticipate and assess the risk of emergencies

Newly identified or evolving risks that have the potential to harm to communities, organisations, infrastructure, or the environment. Emerging threats require continuous assessment and adaptation of risk management strategies.

Vulnerability

Vulnerability refers to the characteristics (such as lack of income) of individuals, communities, assets, or systems that affect their susceptibility to harm, specifically abilities to anticipate, cope with, resist, and recover from harm. These characteristics are shaped by political, social, economic, or environmental conditions, such as inflation, job losses, and unemployment.

Vulnerability analysis

Vulnerability analysis is the process of assessing the susceptibility of individuals, communities, assets, systems, or the environment to harm from identified hazards and threats. This includes evaluating specific vulnerability characteristics (such as poverty and poor health) and understanding the underlying political, social, economic, and environmental factors that contribute to these vulnerabilities.

Risk foresight

Risk foresight involves proactively identifying and evaluating potential future risks and opportunities by systematically examining emerging trends, threats, and uncertainties to anticipate possible scenarios and their impacts. Unlike risk assessment, which focuses on known risks, risk foresight emphasises anticipating future changes and uncertainties to help society navigate risks and leverage opportunities.

Risk ownership

The assignment of responsibility for managing specific risks within an organization or system. Risk ownership determines accountability and the implementation of appropriate management measures.

Early action

Readiness or proactive measures taken immediately before an emergency or disruptive event to reduce exposure and potential harm. These actions might include issuing warnings, erecting temporary protective barriers, evacuation, and forward deployment of resources.

Early Warning

Systems and processes to detect, assess, and communicate hazards and threats before they cause harm. Effective warning maximises the timely available for early actions.

Unmet needs

Gaps in resources, capabilities, or support systems of affected people usually resulting

from the impacts of the emergency or disruptive event and that hinder effective response and recovery. Quickly identifying and addressing these unmet needs ensures that the harm caused by the emergency does not worsen due to prolonged lack of support.

Planning Assumptions

Predefined expectations about potential emergency conditions, risks, resource availability, and response capabilities, used to guide emergency planning. These assumptions must be evidence-based and detailed in associated planning scenarios.

Common consequences

These are similar impacts and disruptions that can result from different types of hazards and threats. For example, power outages are a common consequence of severe weather events, cyber-attacks, industrial accidents,

Emergency Preparedness

Refers to the overall state of having all the necessary emergency capabilities in place. It involves raising awareness of risks, developing plans and arrangements for readiness, response, and recovery, training those involved, and testing, validating, and assuring these capabilities.

Emergency Planning

Emergency Planning is a component of emergency preparedness. It involves the development of specific plans and procedures to address potential emergencies. This includes identifying roles and responsibilities, establishing communication protocols, and outlining the steps to be taken during an emergency.

Anticipate and assess the risk of emergencies

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