



Office for Product  
Safety & Standards

# Incident Management Plan

**Version 4.0**

August 2022



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# 1 About this plan

- 1.1 This plan describes how the Office for Product Safety and Standards (OPSS) will identify, assess, and manage incidents, emergencies and disruptive events across its regulatory responsibilities<sup>1</sup>.

## Objectives and scope

- 1.2 This plan sets out OPSS' framework for recognising and responding to incidents in conjunction with policy owners, agencies, local authorities, other market surveillance authorities, border control authorities, stakeholders, and industry.
- 1.3 The objectives of this plan are to:
- ensure effective mechanisms for identifying and escalating a potential incident are in place;
  - ensure there is a coherent, transparent and accountable process for declaring and responding to an incident, emergencies and disruptive events;
  - ensure robust command and control procedures are in place;
  - provide the capability to determine the key parties and resources required to develop and implement an effective response;
  - ensure effective engagement across all parties; and
  - highlight incident de-escalation and lessons to be learnt processes.
- 1.4 This plan can be flexibly deployed. In particular, the principles described under command & control could be deployed for other emergency responses that OPSS may be called to undertake.

## Incident definition

- 1.5 OPSS defines an incident as:

***"An event, where, based on the information available, an OPSS response is likely to significantly mitigate the risk of harm to the public or environment, and maintain the confidence of stakeholders and ministers."***

## Strategy and priorities

- 1.6 When OPSS declares an incident, OPSS will act swiftly, decisively and in partnership to:
- protect people and places;
  - make the best use of scientific and technical evidence, product testing, incident data, risk analysis and intelligence in decision making;
  - work with business to help them address issues;

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<sup>1</sup> For details of OPSS's regulatory responsibilities see: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-regulation-enforcement-services>

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- use the full range of tools and powers to manage the incident in a proportionate, fair, and accountable manner; and
  - maintain or restore public confidence in the issues the incident relates to.
- 1.7 In accordance with the public sector equality duty (Section 149(1) of the Equality Act 2010), in carrying out its functions, OPSS will consider the needs of all individuals to establish how different people will be affected, with rigorous consideration given to those individuals with protected characteristics. For example, OPSS may consider how businesses prioritise protection of the elderly and/or those with a disability and whether certain information is reproduced in a variety of minority languages.
- 1.8 The requirements of the public sector equality duty will be considered at all levels of the response, from setting the strategic direction, overseeing the delivery, monitoring the effectiveness of the response, how we analyse data, communicate with stakeholders and in relation to setting policies and procedures for our own employees to ensure equality of opportunity.

## 2 Identification and escalation of potential incidents

- 2.1 Potential incidents may be identified from a range of internal and external sources including, but not limited to national regulators, ministers, other government departments, emergency services, local authorities (e.g., trading standards, building control, etc.), businesses, trade bodies, media coverage (including social media), members of the public and other stakeholders.
- 2.2 OPSS Teams becoming aware of an issue that could be or lead to an incident should follow the process shown at Figure A and discuss with line management within their own functional area as required.
- 2.3 The principle of subsidiarity should apply, and decisions should be taken at the lowest appropriate level within the organisation. It will be for the Functional Team Leader (FTL) to determine if further assessment may be required, liaising with appropriate experts as appropriate, to make initial decisions on handling the issue or referring it to the deputy director for consideration as a potential incident. In any event the OPSS Incident Management Team (IMT) should be informed of the issue and reserve the right to escalate to an incident if appropriate.
- 2.4 At each escalation stage, the issue should be evaluated against the incident impact matrix in Table 1. An assessment at medium and above would normally generate some type of response whether within the functional area or as a declared incident.
- 2.5 Issues would normally be escalated through Case Assessment and Monitoring (CAM) meetings for further consideration. CAM meetings are held routinely to consider consumer or construction product safety issues but where appropriate, ad-hoc meetings or sub-groups may be convened to consider urgent or other (e.g. non-product safety) issues.
- 2.6 Where incident triggers are not being met and/or for non-urgent issues requiring a tactical steer, advice may be sought from the Tactical Tasking Group (TTG).
- 2.7 Where incident triggers are being met and/or for urgent issues, OPSS may hold one or a series of case conferences.

### Case Assessment and Monitoring meeting

- 2.8 The primary purpose of the CAM meeting is to assess if an issue has the potential to require intervention or coordination by OPSS.
- 2.9 CAM is chaired by the IMT and will:
  - commission and monitor actions, advice and reports from relevant teams (e.g., Intelligence, risk, legal, technical and scientific services, etc.) to aid with assessing the issue and determining next steps;
  - reassess cases as new evidence emerges or circumstances change;
  - make recommendations to the Tactical Tasking Group (TTG) where appropriate;
  - recommend escalation of issues to case conference that have grounds to become an incident;

- monitor ongoing investigations or live issues; and
  - where appropriate, identify ways of supporting local authorities when they are leading a response.
- 2.10 For consumer and construction product safety issues, CAM will use three criteria to delineate OPSS led activity from local authority (LA) led activity:
- **Nationally Significant** – resourcing and/or expertise needed to investigate is beyond the capacity of an LA, there is a high level of public concern and national interest; and/or
  - **Novel** – the risks of the usage of a product are unknown and unquantified; and/or
  - **Contentious** – instances in which a single, centrally delivered answer is required to minimise the potential for dispute between industry, regulator, and other stakeholders.
- One or more of these three triggers could be used to delineate OPSS led activity from LA.
- 2.11 CAM will generally only escalate consumer and construction product safety issues where nationally significant, novel or contentious (NNC) criteria are met.
- 2.12 For other (non-product safety) issues, CAM will consider the issue against the incident impact matrix in Table 1.

### Tactical Tasking Group (TTG)

- 2.13 Chaired by the Deputy Chief Executive, Regulations, TTG meetings take place routinely to consider issues escalated from the operational level where incident triggers are not being met and/or for non-urgent issues requiring a tactical steer. TTG will consider issues against escalation triggers and strategic priorities to provide appropriate tasking and direction. TTG may recommend escalation of issues to case conference that have grounds to become an incident.

### Case conference

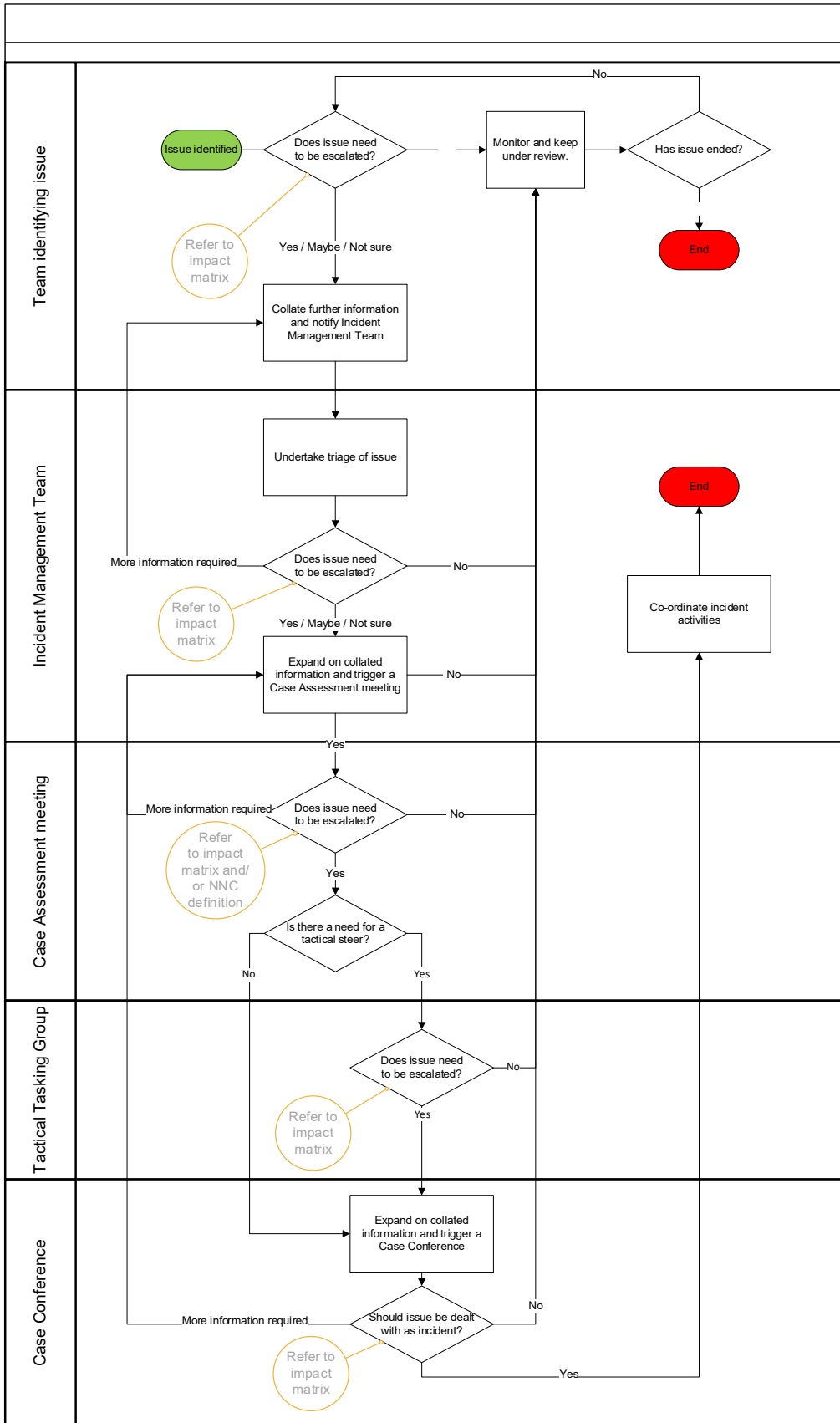
- 2.14 A case conference is a decision-making forum for determining next steps including, where appropriate, declaring an OPSS incident.
- 2.15 They take place when:
- an initial investigation has concluded with a recommendation on enforcement action with potentially significant impacts on the business and/or OPSS or wider population (e.g. legal, business continuity, multi/national company);
  - grounds exist to suggest that the current case could become an incident; or
  - there may be a significant impact on resources.
- 2.16 Case conferences may be requested by:
- A deputy director or higher from OPSS; or
  - the G6 Head of IMT in consultation with an appropriate director/deputy director; or
  - the affected FTL in consultation with the director or a deputy director.

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- 2.17 OPSS attendees will be dependent on the circumstances of the case and issues under consideration. Where appropriate, the relevant PA, LA or other operational partners may be invited to attend.
- 2.18 Each case conference will consider the background to the case, updates from investigations and testing (if applicable), science and technical advice, intelligence, communications and recommendations from other meetings (e.g., CAM or TTG) to determine and agree next steps.
- 2.19 The likely outcome of a case conference may be to:
- request further information or actions (e.g., enforcement action/further testing/intel etc.).
  - agree if wider OPSS coordination is required as part of operational delivery;
  - declare an incident; or
  - record that OPSS take no further action and make arrangements to feedback the outcome to the originator.
- 2.20 If a case conference decides to declare an incident, section 4 of this plan will be invoked to ensure clear command, control and communication structures are put in place to direct, coordinate, and support an effective response.



Figure A – Incident escalation process



**Table 1 – Incident impact matrix**

The table provides examples to help categorise the impact of an issue and consider the need for action:

- Critical – the potential consequences are such that they must be treated as a high priority by developing strategies to reduce or eliminate them.
- High– the potential consequences are sufficiently serious to warrant appropriate consideration be given to develop strategies to reduce or eliminate them.
- Medium– are less significant and should be monitored to ensure that they are being appropriately managed.
- Low– may not be significant impact so require minimal monitoring and control.

Indicator	Low	Medium	High	Critical
<b>Nature and potential impact of the issue to the safety of the public</b>	A safety risk to the public exists, isolated examples of harm may have occurred, but this risk can be mitigated effectively.	High numbers of the public have experienced moderate harm, or several related cases of more serious harm have occurred, or it is possible that it may be caused.	A number of the public have been severely harmed or are likely to be severely harmed.	Severe harm to large numbers of the public has been caused or is highly likely to be caused.
<b>Nature and potential impact of non-compliance (no public safety issues)</b>	There has been/likely to be no or limited consumer detriment, environmental detriment and/or adverse impact on other businesses.	There has been/likely to be There has been a low level of consumer detriment, environmental detriment and/ or adverse impact on other businesses.	There has been/likely to be a significant level of consumer detriment, environmental detriment and/ or adverse impact on other businesses.	
<b>Remedial Action (complexity)</b>	Remedial action is underway and is being well managed by the business, overseen by OPSS and/ or other regulators	Urgent remedial action is required that may be complex, require action by multiple businesses or where a business is not conducting the necessary urgent actions.	Urgent remedial action is required that may necessitate action from a large number of businesses. Remedial action to reduce the risk being targeted may impact adversely on other types of risk.	Urgent cross-government action required to make the necessary remedial action effective in reducing the risk.
<b>Public Confidence</b>	Short-term or low level of public concern.	Heightened loss of public confidence.	Significant national loss of confidence in the regulatory protection provided.	Widespread loss of confidence in the regulatory protection provided and/or the integrity of the UK supply chain.

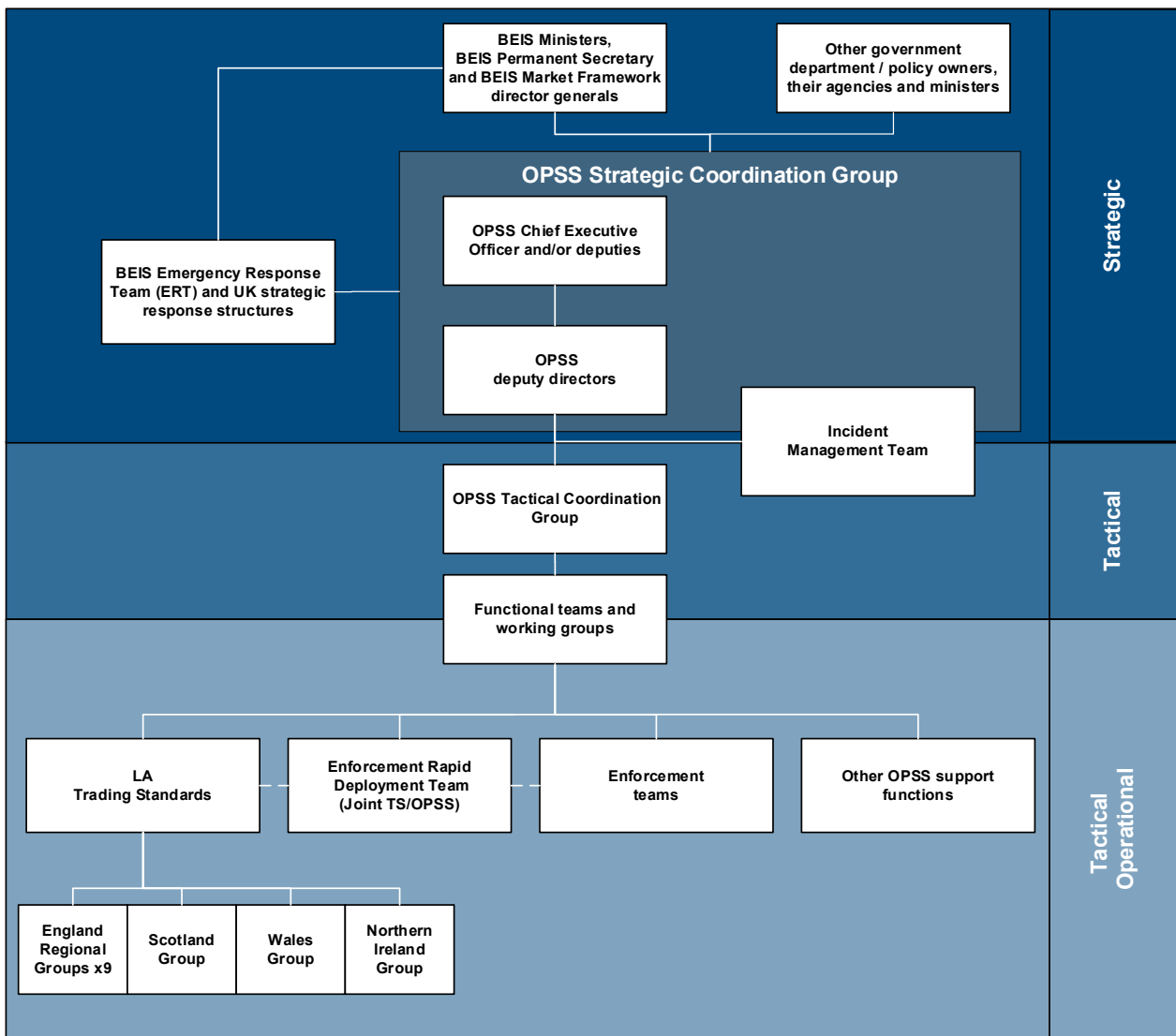
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<b>Media Interest</b>	None or short-lived interest requiring brief statement.	Increasing interest requiring coordinated briefings and statements.	Prolonged interest requiring significant media monitoring and frequent briefings and statements.	Sustained national and/or international interest requiring clearance of statements beyond the government department with policy responsibility.
<b>Reputational risk to the policy owner</b>	No, or extremely limited risk to reputation.	Potential for some impact to reputation.	Serious impact to reputation.	Sustained impact to reputation
<b>Financial risk to the policy owner</b>	Can be managed with no additional financial impact	Likely to involve limited additional expenditure within budget	Likely to involve large scale expenditure requiring additional funding	Likely to require significant additional funding
<b>Ministerial / Parliamentary interest</b>	None or short-lived interest requiring brief update or statement	Increasing interest requiring coordinated briefings and statements.	Prolonged interest requiring frequent briefings and statements.	Sustained interest requiring briefings and statements beyond the government department with policy responsibility.

### 3 OPSS command and control arrangements

- 3.1 In response to an incident, OPSS will establish three levels of command operating at a strategic, tactical, or operational level.
- 3.2 Figure B illustrates OPSS incident command structures and how they interrelate with wider BEIS, other government departments and agencies and wider government response structures. Flexibility and proportionality of the response is important, as such it may not be necessary to mobilise all units for every incident.

**Figure B – Incident command structures**



## Groups and committees

### Strategic Coordination Group (SCG)

- 3.3 The SCG is an OPSS body, chaired by the Deputy Director for Testing and Targeting.
- 3.4 The purpose of SCG is to take overall responsibility for the management of the incident and to set out and oversee the strategic framework within which the Tactical Coordination Group (TCG) will operate.
- 3.5 In setting and reviewing the strategy for a response, the SCG will consider:
- What happened (intelligence, information and impacts);
  - Strategic aim and the governing objectives;
  - Immediate priorities;
  - Support required to deliver the priorities (resources, information, authority, finance);
  - Who needs to know, what and when (communications strategy);
  - Engagement with ministers, press office and stakeholders; and
  - Incident exit strategy.
- 3.6 Where appropriate, the SCG will also consider how to establish strategic, cross-government lines of communication, ensuring these are in place between BEIS and relevant government departments. The SCG will set clear deadlines for updates, which must be met by OPSS teams and partners.

### Tactical Coordination Group (TCG)

- 3.7 The TCG manages and coordinates the response at a tactical level through the application of the strategy set by the SCG.
- 3.8 The TCG will be chaired by the deputy director responsible for the function impacted by the incident or their Grade 6 deputy.
- 3.9 The TCG will provide advice and guidance to the SCG and guidance and instruction to operational teams, decide the schedule of events, review risk assessments and agree their management strategies, agree an engagement strategy, confirm financial resources, and consider staff resources.
- 3.10 Relevant FTLs will sit on the TCG and are accountable to the TCG chair. FTLs are responsible for specific areas of OPSS' incident response and will be expected to attend TCG and other related meetings. FTLs will hold cascade briefings on a regular basis with their team members, covering relevant output from the TCG and SCG meetings, assigning tasks to the team, agreeing timescales, and setting quality standards. FTLs may convene working groups to co-ordinate specific workstreams.

### Bird table / stand up meetings

- 3.11 Bird table meetings may be held to:
- provide a structure for the management of the incident by meeting regularly;
  - facilitate the effective management of the incident by ensuring communication between all policy, operational, and communications functions involved;
  - provide brief situation reports on all aspects of the operation to those concerned in its management;
  - encourage a coordinated and cooperative response; and

- identify key emerging issues and allocate responsibility for resolving them and reporting back.
- 3.12 All OPSS staff involved in the incident are encouraged to attend bird table meetings to reduce the need for situation updates in other meetings.
- 3.13 Updates include a strategic overview, short situation reports from each team, including any issues they are coming across and communication of key items from the schedule of events.

### Ad-hoc groups

- 3.14 In addition to regular meetings of groups such as the SCG and TCG which form an established part of the incident response command and control structure, it may be appropriate to establish other ad-hoc groups including:
- **Cross-Whitehall Incident Coordination Cell** – may be convened to provide a briefing and coordination function for regulators and policy-owning departments with a stake in a declared incident. The group provides an opportunity for members to receive regular, strategic and tactical level briefing in relation to the incident, facilitate coordination on cross-departmental issues and decisions, including policy and ministerial briefings, communications and messaging; and technical evidence. Attendees will reflect the issues under consideration and may include representatives from OPSS, wider BEIS, other UK regulators and policy owners for example Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra), Department for Transport (DfT), Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV) and Health & Safety Executive (HSE).
  - **Regulatory Co-ordination Cell (RCC)** – may be convened to provide specialist advice and coordinated support for dealing with national regulatory issues. Members of the group may share intelligence and analysis on market surveillance activities to focus strategic efforts and if necessary, coordinate with Approved and Notified Bodies, test houses and government laboratories to support UK testing capability and capacity, and to facilitate the rapid testing of products to inform decision making. Attendees will reflect the issues under consideration and may include representatives from OPSS, wider BEIS, and other UK regulators such as the Health and Safety Executive (HSE and HSE Northern Ireland), Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency (MHRA), Building Safety Regulator (BSR), etc.
  - **Incident Expert/Advisory Group** – may be convened/commissioned where there is a need to obtain specialist advice or independent verification of OPSS considerations. Attendees will reflect the issues under consideration and may include representatives from OPSS, modelling experts, economists, and scientists in the required fields. These may be sourced within government, its agencies, from external organisations such as academia and others identified from a register of specialists that OPSS has developed.
  - **Incident Evidence Groups** – may be convened at strategic and tactical levels to ensure coordinated and timely scientific, technical, and analytical advice is made available to SCG, TCG, policy and enforcement colleagues and/or others as required such as the Expert Group. Attendees would be drawn from the main analytical and technical teams in OPSS.

- **Monitoring meetings with businesses and trade associations** – may be convened with businesses and, where relevant, trade associations, involved in complex or protracted issues to understand proposed actions before they are taken, maintain dialogue and obtain data and updates from activities.
- 3.15 During the commissioning and establishment of ad-hoc groups, OPSS will consider its exit strategy, including the identification of longer-term responsible persons or groups.

## Roles and responsibilities

### Strategic functions

- 3.16 Strategic functions will be kept informed and depending on the nature of the incident, may become directly involved. Key functions include:
- **Ministerial team:** The relevant Secretary of State (SoS) and departmental ministers may be required to brief Parliament, the Cabinet and No. 10 about the incident and emerging risks.
  - **Permanent Secretary and departmental director generals with relevant policy responsibilities:** Will work with their ministerial teams to ensure No.10 and other government departments are appropriately engaged.
  - **OPSS Chief Executive Officer (CEO) & Deputy Chief Executive Officers (DCEOs):** Are responsible for setting the strategic direction and incident decision making. Through representation at the SCG, they will plan the delivery of strategic and tactical decisions and ensure appropriate management is in place to handle the incident. They will authorise recruitment of additional staff and ensure all strategic functions are kept informed of progress and risks.

To enhance resilience and maintain critical business activities, the CEO may delegate CEO incident responsibilities to one of their DCEOs. In the event of concurrent incidents, responsibilities for each may be delegated to further DCEOs with the CEO ensuring activities across the DCEOs are co-ordinated.

- **Emergency Response Capabilities and Operations (ERCO):** was established within BEIS to improve the way the Department coordinates its preparation for and response to emergencies. For the purposes of incident response, OPSS will engage with ERCO in the case of an incident that is, or could develop to be, risk assessed as High or Critical.

If ERCO establishes an Emergency Response Team (ERT), OPSS will provide policy advice, links to industry and ensure that subsequent implications are considered. The ERT will have cross-BEIS membership and is likely to be constituted only when there are cross-sector impacts. The ERT works within central government response mechanisms, potentially as the Lead Government Department (LGD). The objective of the ERT is to set the overall cross-government strategy for the response.

OPSS, on advice from ERCO, will decide when to notify the Cabinet Office Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS) of an incident of concern. CCS in liaison with the LGD will decide whether an emergency requires a coordinated response under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004. CCS, the LGD and No.10 may choose to activate Cabinet Office Briefing Rooms (COBR) to facilitate decision making and allow rapid execution of the coordinated central government response.

## Tactical and operational functions

- 3.17 Tactical leads will be dependent on the specific circumstances of the incident. Leads will be drawn from OPSS functional areas, some, or all of which may also have a role in the operational response. OPSS maintains a list of functional area responsibilities to help determine those that should be involved with the incident.
- 3.18 One or more TCGs will be set up to co-ordinate work across relevant functional areas bringing together disciplines from across OPSS that may include analysis, connections, engagement, enforcement, engineering, finance, legal, intelligence, people, policy, risk, science, and testing.

## OPSS Incident Management Team (IMT)

- 3.19 IMT coordinates activities across the strategic and tactical levels to support incidents or emergencies. The main functions include:
- Secretariat – Undertakes secretariat functions for specific meetings within OPSS and sets the schedule of meetings in conjunction with the chair of the TCG.
  - Management Information – Collates management information from OPSS and wider operational teams.
  - Reporting – collates updates from teams involved to provide management information and situation reports to OPSS, BEIS and wider government as required.
  - Incident and risk planning, horizon scanning and de-escalation planning.
  - Issues resolution – Provides advice and guidance on emergency management and takes forward issues for resolution, ensuring the correct people are involved in solving the issue.
  - Ramp down and closure – Develop plans to return activities to a normal business state and implement measures to close the incident.
  - Undertaking lessons identified feedback sessions and reporting on these.
- 3.20 In the event of a protracted incident, it may be necessary to remain in response mode for an extended period. IMT will lead the establishment of a succession plan to ensure continuity of capability.

## Operational partners

- 3.21 Depending on the nature, scale and severity of an incident, coordinating groups may be set up and may include representation from operational partners to provide a coordinated response. These may include:
- **Cabinet Office, Civil Contingencies Secretariat (CCS):** is responsible for overseeing the cross-government response if an incident requires it. CCS supports lead departments and ministers, working with other departments, bilaterally or multilaterally, at a strategic level to identify emerging issues and develop solutions or policy options for putting to ministers and COBR. If an incident requires the involvement of the CCS, BEIS ERCO team would liaise with CCS directly on behalf of OPSS<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> BEIS' ERCO would also work in conjunction with relevant policy owning departments for area of regulation not owned by BEIS but regulated by OPSS.



- **Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS):** is the parent department for OPSS. BEIS owns the policy for various areas regulated by OPSS including product safety, legal metrology, eco-design of energy consuming products, energy information regulations, heat networks and noise emissions from outdoor equipment.
- **Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra):** is responsible for improving and protecting the environment. Defra owns the policy for various areas regulated by OPSS including Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE), waste batteries, timber and timber-related products, restriction of hazardous substances (RoHS), end-of-life vehicles and access and benefit sharing (Nagoya Protocol).
- **Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC):** owns policy on construction products and holds OPSS to account for its role as the national regulator for construction products. DLUHC also oversees local government, planning and building safety. In the event of an investigation into a high-risk construction product safety issue, DLUHC will coordinate activity with OPSS, their press office and other stakeholders to keep their Secretary of State and officials updated.
- **Department for Transport (DfT):** holds policy responsibility for maintaining high standards of safety and security in transport across the UK. These include policy ownership over market surveillance of motor vehicles, and of systems, components and separate technical units intended for vehicles as well as regulations on marine equipment. It does this via its market surveillance authorities such as the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) who enforce safety legislation and regulations to ensure product safety within the transport sector.
- **Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) Market Surveillance Unit:** undertakes an annual programme of work, inspecting and testing automotive products in the UK to check if they meet legal requirements, with regards to road safety and the environment, comply with the standards to which they were approved and if they present a safety risk under General Product Safety Regulations (GPSR) 2005.
- **Health and Safety Executive (HSE):** HSE is a GB market surveillance authority that monitors and enforces legal requirements on the safety (including risks to health) of most products used at work and the regulation of biocides, pesticides, detergents, and certain chemicals. This work is undertaken in addition to HSE's other functions, including its traditional role as a workplace health and safety regulator.
- **Building Safety Regulator (BSR):** BSR is part of HSE and in England will be responsible for overseeing the safety and standards of buildings, helping and encouraging the built environment industry and building control professionals to improve their competence and leading implementation of the new regulatory framework for high-rise buildings - buildings with 7 or more storeys or that are 18 metres or higher and have at least 2 residential units or are hospitals or care homes (during design, construction and occupation phase) or are hospitals or care homes (during design and construction).

- **Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI):** is responsible for the promotion and enforcement of health and safety at work standards in Northern Ireland (NI). It shares this responsibility with the eleven local councils. HSENI is a market surveillance authority that monitors and enforces legal requirements on the safety (including risks to health) of most products used at work. This work is undertaken in addition to HSENI's other functions, including its traditional role as a workplace health and safety regulator.
- **Medicines and Healthcare Regulatory Agency (MHRA):** regulates medicines, medical devices and blood components for transfusion in the UK ensuring they meet applicable standards of safety, quality and efficacy, their supply chains are safe and secure, promoting international standardisation and harmonisation and helping to educate the public and healthcare professionals about risks and benefits.
- **Office of Communications (Ofcom):** is the communications regulator in the UK and is an enforcing authority for the Radio Equipment Regulations 2017 and Electromagnetic Compatibility Regulations 2016 as they apply in Great Britain (GB) and NI. Ofcom regulates the TV, radio and video on demand factors, fixed line telecoms, mobiles, postal services plus the airwaves over which wireless devices operate.
- **Office for Zero Emission Vehicles (OZEV):** is part of DfT and BEIS working across government to support the transition to zero emission vehicles. OZEV owns the policy for areas regulated by OPSS including electric vehicle smart charge points, alternative fuel infrastructure and alternative fuel labelling.
- **Local Authority Trading Standards Teams in GB and District Council Environmental Health teams in NI:** have frontline enforcement responsibility for consumer and construction product safety at the local level. These authorities are supported by OPSS as the UK national regulator and use data and intelligence to inform their risk-based approach to identifying priorities and planning interventions.

### Schedule of events (battle rhythm) and situation reports

- 3.22 A schedule of events (often referred to as the battle rhythm) is established to allow all participants to be aware of the incident activities and meetings, so they can better plan their involvement.
- 3.23 The schedule will be developed and maintained by IMT in agreement with the TCG. The schedule will vary depending on the size and scale of the issues being faced and will change over time.
- 3.24 The IMT will produce regular situation reports. The TCG will set the frequency for production of the situation reports taking into consideration the reporting needs of OPSS, wider BEIS and Government response structures.
- 3.25 If CCS activate COBR, OPSS situation reports will be used to provide specific OPSS information into any Commonly Recognised Information Picture (CRIP). The timings for these contributions will be agreed with CCS.

## Escalation, de-escalation, and closure

- 3.26 The management of an incident at the appropriate level will help to ensure an effective and proportionate response. A decision whether to escalate an incident through the differing response levels will be driven by its severity, scale and impact, and the expectations of OPSS to respond. The IMT lead decides whether to flag an incident for escalation at the appropriate level.
- 3.27 As an incident draws towards resolution, it may be appropriate to de-escalate to a lower level, or to return completely to routine business. This decision will be taken by IMT and the chair of the TCG in consultation with the SCG.
- 3.28 IMT will co-ordinate de-escalation, agreeing transition of incident activities back into normal operations and ensuring residual work is programmed back into relevant functional work project plans.
- 3.29 Once closed, all OPSS led incidents are subject to review as described in section 6 of this plan.

## 4 Engagement

### Strategy

- 4.1 Regulatory engagement with the business(es) involved in the supply chain of the affected products will be led by OPSS or local authorities depending on the regulatory area and operational decisions.
- 4.2 OPSS, through the TCG, will engage with stakeholders such as consumer bodies, trade associations and other national or international bodies to keep them informed and seek views, for example, seeking industry views on a specific technical issue. The TCG will work with the operational team closest to an issue to identify relevant stakeholders.
- 4.3 OPSS will engage with relevant operational partners in the management of the incident and the media via BEIS press office or where appropriate, another government department's policy team and press office.
- 4.4 OPSS will, when appropriate create a stakeholder engagement plan which will take account of the above and ensure we:
  - provide operational partners with timely information about our actions, the actions of the businesses involved and what they need to do;
  - provide consumers and businesses with appropriate information where they need to act. This may include publishing safety messages on the Product Recalls and Alerts website on Gov.uk;
  - work with relevant operational partners and stakeholders as appropriate, ensuring safety messages get to the right end users, including hard to reach groups and those who are more vulnerable;
  - keep BEIS, other government departments and the devolved administrations informed where they have a significant interest in the incident.
- 4.5 OPSS has the ability, through procurement of an external call centre service, to quickly scale up its emergency call handling operations to process commensurate levels of enquiries from the public. This will ensure OPSS is able to provide timely and accurate advice and reassurance to consumers.
- 4.6 There may be incidents where another government department or agency is leading on the overall response that require OPSS input or support. In these instances, OPSS' incident management plan will be put into place to feed into the overall response, and to cover OPSS' areas of responsibility.

### International

- 4.7 OPSS has strong links with regulators and bodies internationally. which enable us to deliver a more joined up and consistent service. This includes sharing information and data on compliance and risk, where the law allows, to help target regulatory resources and identify non-compliance.

## 5 Incident review

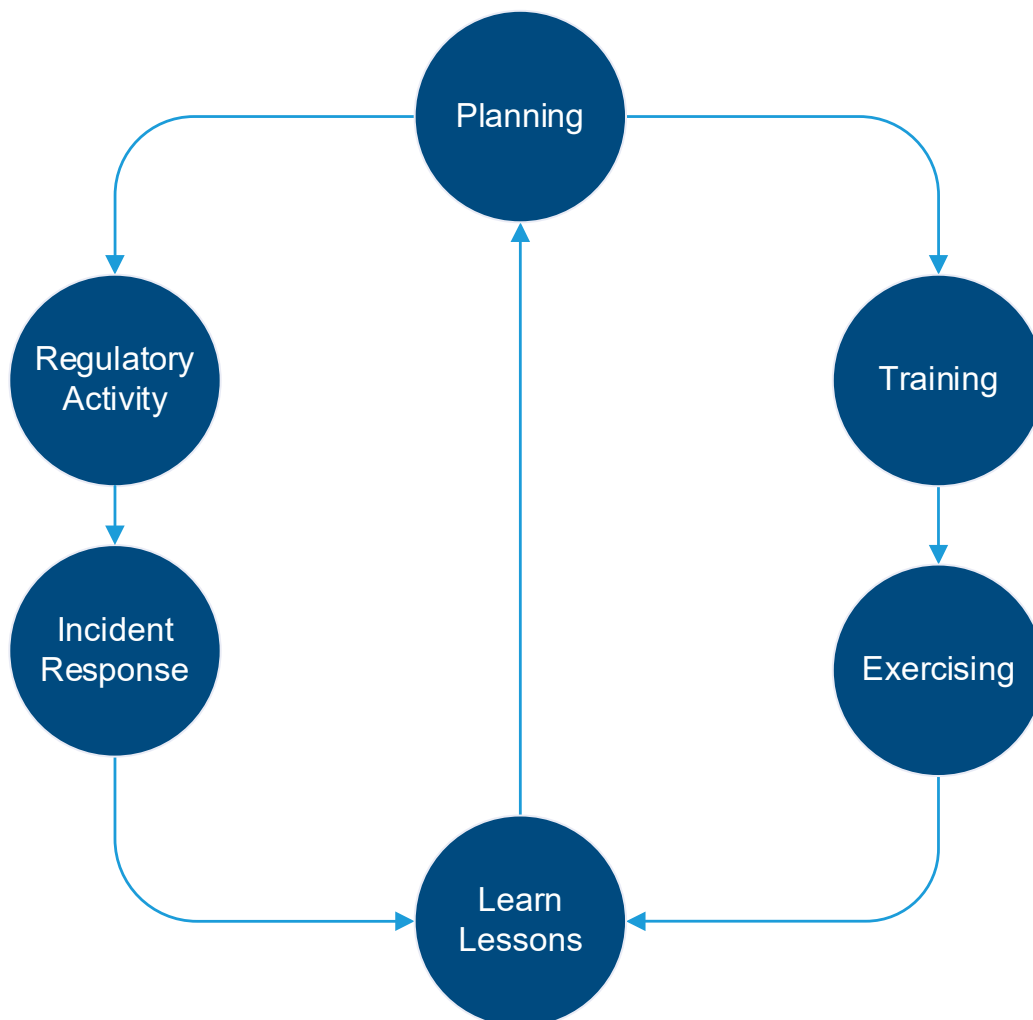
- 5.1 A review will be undertaken for all OPSS led incidents to identify areas for improvement and 'lessons to be learned'. Lessons will feed back into reviews of this Incident Management Plan to adapt and improve incident response procedures.
- 5.2 Reviews may involve stakeholders and examine any element of the incident response including detection, notification, assessment, mobilisation, response strategy, response effectiveness, command and control structure, communications, engagement, and stakeholder relations.

## 6 Readiness for incidents

6.1 The Head of IMT is responsible for ensuring that OPSS is prepared to respond to incidents. Adopting the principles for emergency planning contained in Part 1 of the Civil Contingencies Act and as illustrated in Figure C, they ensure that:

- suitable plans are in place and exercised;
- staff are suitably trained;
- notifications are monitored and surveillance is undertaken to identify, assess and act on emerging trends/ risks;
- post-incident reviews are undertaken, and lessons identified are implemented;
- effective relationships exist with key operational partners; and
- contingency planning best practice is shared and implemented with OPSS teams.

Figure C – Adopted principles for emergency planning



## Plans and operational instructions

- 6.2 OPSS will conduct annual reviews of this plan to ensure it remains fit for purpose. These reviews will ensure that the incident assessment and classification process is effective, and that there is a robust command and control structure, with roles and responsibilities correctly assigned. In addition, lessons learned from invocations and feedback received will be reviewed for incorporation into the plan. Feedback on this plan should be sent to [opss.enquiries@beis.gov.uk](mailto:opss.enquiries@beis.gov.uk) for the attention of “Incident Management”.
- 6.3 To ensure resources can be made available to invoke and implement this incident management plan, OPSS has identified its critical business activities and planned for the prioritisation of its routine activities. Deputies for key personnel have been identified and succession plans developed.
- 6.4 OPSS conduct an annual capability assessment of OPSS teams’ ability to respond to incidents, including concurrent incidents. Findings of these reviews are used to identify gaps, develop future training needs teams, and promote conversations about team resilience and readiness.
- 6.5 This incident management plan is supplemented by instructions maintained within the key OPSS teams.

## Training

- 6.6 FTLs are responsible for ensuring staff identified for response roles receive adequate, in-role training to enable a rapid deployment into that role.
- 6.7 Staff are also expected to play active roles in the exercising of the incident management plan and associated procedures.
- 6.8 IMT co-ordinate training needs analysis to identify training requirements across OPSS.

## Exercises

- 6.9 OPSS coordinates exercises to refine and demonstrate emergency preparedness to deal effectively with incidents.
- 6.10 Since the last iteration of this plan, OPSS has undertaken scenario-based exercises that examined the processing and incident readiness for construction products.
- 6.11 In addition, this plan was invoked to deal with incidents relating to small, high-powered magnets and rainscreen insulation boards.
- 6.12 Lessons identified from exercises and invocations have been used to highlight and promote best practice and update OPSS plans.

## International monitoring and engagement

- 6.13 OPSS monitors national and international intelligence sources to identify products that could be of cause of concern to the UK market.
- 6.14 OPSS also facilitates conversations and information transfers with relevant international regulators upon request. This is in addition to the data sharing arrangements in place as part of Free Trade Agreements and other international agreements.

## Appendix A: Glossary

BEIS	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
BSR	Building Safety Regulator
CEO	Chief Executive Officers
DCEO	Deputy Chief Executive Officers
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DLUHC	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
DfT	Department for Transport
DVSA	Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency
CAM	Case Assessment and Monitoring (meetings)
CCS	Civil Contingencies Secretariat
COBR	Cabinet Office Briefing Rooms
CRIP	Commonly Recognised Information Picture
CTSI	Chartered Trading Standards Institute
DVSA	Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency
ERCO	Emergency Response Capabilities and Operations
ERT	Emergency Response Team
EU	European Union
FTL	Functional Team Leader
GPSR	General Product Safety Regulations 2005, as applicable in GB and NI
GB	Great Britain
HSE	Health and Safety Executive
HSENI	Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland
IMT	Incident Management Team
LA	Local Authority
LGD	Lead Government Department
MCA	Maritime and Coastguard Agency
MHRA	Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency
NI	Northern Ireland
NNC	Nationally Significant, Novel, Contentious - criteria used by OPSS when assessing consumer and construction product safety issues
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Ofcom	Office of Communications
Operational partners	Organisations that have a statutory or similar responsibility to act for matters relating to the incident
OPSS	Office for Product Safety and Standards
OZEV	Office for Zero Emission Vehicles
PA	Primary Authority
PAS	Publicly Available Specification
PSD	Product Safety Database
SCG	Strategic Coordination Group
Stakeholders	Organisations, bodies or individuals with a key interest in the incident or that may be able to provide advice, guidance or assistance on matters relating to the incident.
TCG	Tactical Coordination Group
TS	Trading Standards
UK	United Kingdom



## Appendix B: Supporting documents

While this plan describes how OPSS identifies and manages incidents it is responsible for, other documents provide detail, advice and guidance aimed at regulators and business that underpin processes described in this plan. These include:

### For regulators:

- [Resources for regulators](#) – List of links to guidance and tools for regulators.
- [Product safety: support for local authorities](#) – Provides a summary of local authority responsibilities for consumer product safety and links to relevant resources.
- [Notification guidance of product safety and noncompliance by market surveillance authorities](#) – Provides detailed guidance for market surveillance authorities and enforcement authorities on how to notify products posing a risk to consumers or that are noncompliant including the use of the product safety database (PSD).
- [PAS \(Publicly Available Specification\) 7100:2022 Product recall and other corrective actions. Code of practice](#) - Provides recommendations and guidance to help businesses and regulators have appropriate systems and processes in place to deal quickly and effectively if a problem exists with a product.
- [National Product Safety Group - Product Safety Incident Management Plan template \(available via the Knowledge Hub\)](#) – Provides a template incident plan for use by local authorities when assisting a business to manage a product safety incident and to help demonstrate compliance with PAS 7100.
- [OPSS Enforcement Policy](#) – sets out the OPSS approach to dealing with non-compliance by those we regulate and to potential product safety risks.
- [Regulators' Companion](#) – collates documents and links to assist local authority regulators.

### For businesses:

- [Resources for businesses](#) – List of links to guidance and tools for businesses.
- [Notifications of unsafe and noncompliant products by businesses](#) – Provides detailed guidance for businesses on how to notify products posing a risk to consumers or that are noncompliant
- [Information on how to report a serious undesirable effect \(SUE\) or safeguarding issue for cosmetic products](#) – Provides detailed guidance for businesses on how to report a serious undesirable effect (SUE) or safeguarding issue for cosmetic products.
- [OPSS enforcement policy](#) – sets out the OPSS approach for dealing with non-compliance by those we regulate and resolving potential product safety issues.
- [PAS \(Publicly Available Specification\) 7100:2022 Product recall and other corrective actions. Code of practice](#) - Provides recommendations and guidance to help businesses and regulators have appropriate systems and processes in place to deal quickly and effectively if a problem exists with a product.

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<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-product-safety-and-standards>