

Community engagement - policy requirements

BHP Billiton, in its overarching health, safety and environment (HSE) standards and policies, sets requirements for communication, consultation and participation with local communities; business conduct, human rights and indigenous affairs; incident reporting and investigation; and crisis and emergency management. Relevant sections that relate to parts of emergency response planning are reproduced below.

Communication, consultation and participation

Effective communication and consultation is maintained with stakeholders associated with BHP Billiton activities, and they are encouraged to participate in and commit to health, safety, environment and community (HSEC) performance improvement initiatives.

Systems are in place to identify and work with stakeholders and develop strategies to address their concerns and expectations. Consideration is given to the local context and to social and cultural factors in order to facilitate understanding and informed discussion.

The HSEC Policy, the Standards and relevant information on HSEC matters, risks, plans and performance are communicated to employees, contractors and external stakeholders on a regular basis. Systems provide for consultation and feedback and for tracking of follow-up actions.

Employees and contractors participate in the development, implementation, review and improvement of HSEC initiatives and programmes, the establishment of HSEC goals and targets, and the review and verification of HSEC performance. External stakeholders are encouraged to participate in relevant activities.

Open consultation and communication with governments, authorities and other organisations is maintained in order to contribute to the development of public policy, relevant legislation and educational initiatives.

HSEC information and lessons are shared across BHP Billiton sites and operations and, as appropriate, with external stakeholders.

Concerns, complaints and relevant external communications related to the HSEC aspects of BHP Billiton operations are recorded in a register, acknowledged and investigated as incidents, and outcomes are reported back to relevant stakeholders. Mechanisms are in place to resolve conflicts where they arise, through consultation and participation directly with stakeholders or their intermediaries.

The effectiveness of communication, consultation and participation processes is regularly reviewed with stakeholders.

Business conduct, human rights and indigenous affairs

Activities and operations are conducted in an ethical manner that supports fundamental human rights, respects the traditional rights of indigenous peoples and values their cultural heritage.

Paragraph 8.4 of the Standard requires that systems are in place to work with local communities through project development, operational and closure phases to identify needs and set priorities for support of sustainable community development initiatives.

Incident reporting and investigation

Incidents are reported, investigated and analysed. Corrective and preventive actions are taken. Paragraph 13.5 of the Standard requires that information gathered from incident investigations is analysed to identify lessons and monitor trends, and reported to management to improve standards, systems and practices. Lessons learned are shared across the organisation and with other stakeholders as appropriate.

Crisis and emergency management

Procedures and resources are in place to respond effectively to crisis and emergency situations. Systems are in place to identify potential emergency situations and their impacts, including those associated with neighbouring activities.

Plans that define responses (including the mitigation of HSEC impacts) to foreseeable potential emergency scenarios are documented, accessible and communicated. The plans define roles and responsibilities for contractors as well as employees.

Emergency response plans are aligned with the BHP Billiton Crisis and Emergency Management structure and external response organisations, taking into account their response capabilities. Resources required for emergency responses are identified, maintained, tested and available.

Employees, contractors and visitors are trained in and understand the emergency response plans, their roles and responsibilities and the use of emergency response resources. Emergency response drills and exercises are scheduled and conducted regularly, including liaison with and involvement of external response organisations.

Lessons from emergency response drills, exercises and incidents are documented, incorporated into all revisions of plans and resources and shared with other parties as appropriate.

Analysis

A requirement to engage with local communities and emergency response teams is best integrated throughout corporate plans and policies with respect to health, safety and the environment. In this way, the culture is set out for subsidiary operations to engage with local communities in all that they do. Both local communities and company well-being and reputation are safeguarded in this manner.