



# **Emergency** **Evacuation Planning** **for Your Workplace**

**From Chaos to Life-Saving Solutions**

**Jim Burtles** KLJ, CMLJ, FBCI



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**Jim Burtles**, KLJ, MMLJ, FBCI

**Kristen Noakes-Fry**, Editor

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Philip Jan Rothstein, FBCI, Publisher

4 Arapaho Road

Brookfield, Connecticut 06804-3104 USA

203.740.7444 • 203.740.7401 fax

[info@rothstein.com](mailto:info@rothstein.com)

[www.rothstein.com](http://www.rothstein.com)

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**A Business  
Company**

**Emergency**

**Evacuation**

**Plan**

**For  
A Location**

Prepared

By

TCM

Version: 1

# Company Confidential

## Plan Contents

A	A Business Company Emergency Evacuation Plan .....	3
A.1	Introduction .....	3
	Interpretation .....	3
A.2	Contingency Plan Hierarchy.....	4
A.2.1	Liaison with Central Command and Control.....	5
A.3	Evacuation Procedures .....	6
A.3.1	Roles and Responsibilities .....	6
A.3.2	Decision Process .....	8
A.3.3	Alarm and Notification .....	8
A.3.4	Marshalling.....	9
A.4	Liaison with the Emergency Services.....	9
A.5	Emergency Evacuation Process and Timing.....	10
A.6	Emergency Evacuation Procedure .....	11
A.6.1	Exceptions.....	11
A.7	Evacuation .....	12
A.7.1	Choice of Assembly Area .....	12
A.7.2	Choice of Exit and Escape Route.....	12
A.7.3	Emergency Communication with Staff .....	13
A.8	Invacuation .....	13
A.9	Stand Down and Return .....	13
A.9.1.1	Debriefings .....	13
A.10	Evacuation Areas and Routes .....	14
A.10.1	Assembly Areas .....	14
A.10.2	Escape Routes.....	14
A.11	Internal Refuges .....	15
A.11.1	Assigned Invacuees .....	16
A.12	Evacuation Control Team .....	17
A.12.1	Head Marshal.....	17
A.12.2	Marshals .....	17
A.12.3	Marshalling Points.....	17
A.13	Evacuation Head Count.....	18

## **A A Business Company Emergency Evacuation Plan**

### **A.1 Introduction**

This plan is a set of guidelines for the acting Site Security Officer when there is need to evacuate the premises because of a threat to the health and safety of personnel on, or near, the site. Such occasions are known to the emergency services as Imminent Catastrophic Events (ICEs).

It is important to recognise that this is not a fire escape plan nor does it seek to replace any of the fire prevention precautions, procedures and drills.

Wherever there is threat of serious damage to the structure of the building or neighbouring buildings or there is an environmental threat such as flooding or pollution it may be necessary to move people to somewhere that is safer due to its distance from the building or alternatively to somewhere that is safer due to its construction.

Whilst a terrorist threat is a likely trigger for such an evacuation there are many other circumstances where these Emergency Evacuation Procedures may be called into play.

### **Interpretation**

It is not possible to accurately describe the scenario in which this Emergency Evacuation Plan may be invoked, any more than we can know when or how an alert may be raised. Therefore this plan is not prescriptive and the user(s) will have to interpret it or adapt it to fit the actual circumstances.

The Site Security Officer, his deputies, alternates and stand-ins should make themselves familiar with this plan and its implications as a means of ensuring that they are able to properly care for the health and safety of those they are responsible for.

The plan is based upon the assumption that there will be an evacuation window of 20 minutes. The rationale behind this time frame is that whenever a warning is given it is intended to make it possible for the public to reach safety and in the case of some terrorist organisations such warnings are given 30 to 40 minutes before the incident is due to happen. We must also allow for delays in relaying the message from the original point of receipt to the target area. Such delays are necessarily incurred due to the need to evaluate the threat based on existing intelligence and other factors. Warning of other dangers such as storms, floods or riots is usually posted hours before hand.

There are also catastrophes with no prior warning such as industrial accidents, violent crime, lightning strikes and indiscriminate terrorist attacks. In such 'bolt from the blue' circumstances there may be an urgent need for search and rescue operations to be carried out as well as the evacuation of the able bodied. In that instance this plan should enable the evacuation to be carried out efficiently without impacting on the search and rescue activities that would be carried out by the emergency services.

Often in this type of incident there is a distinct danger of further events occurring or the situation may have the potential to deteriorate into something more hazardous which is another reason for evacuating everybody as smoothly as possible.

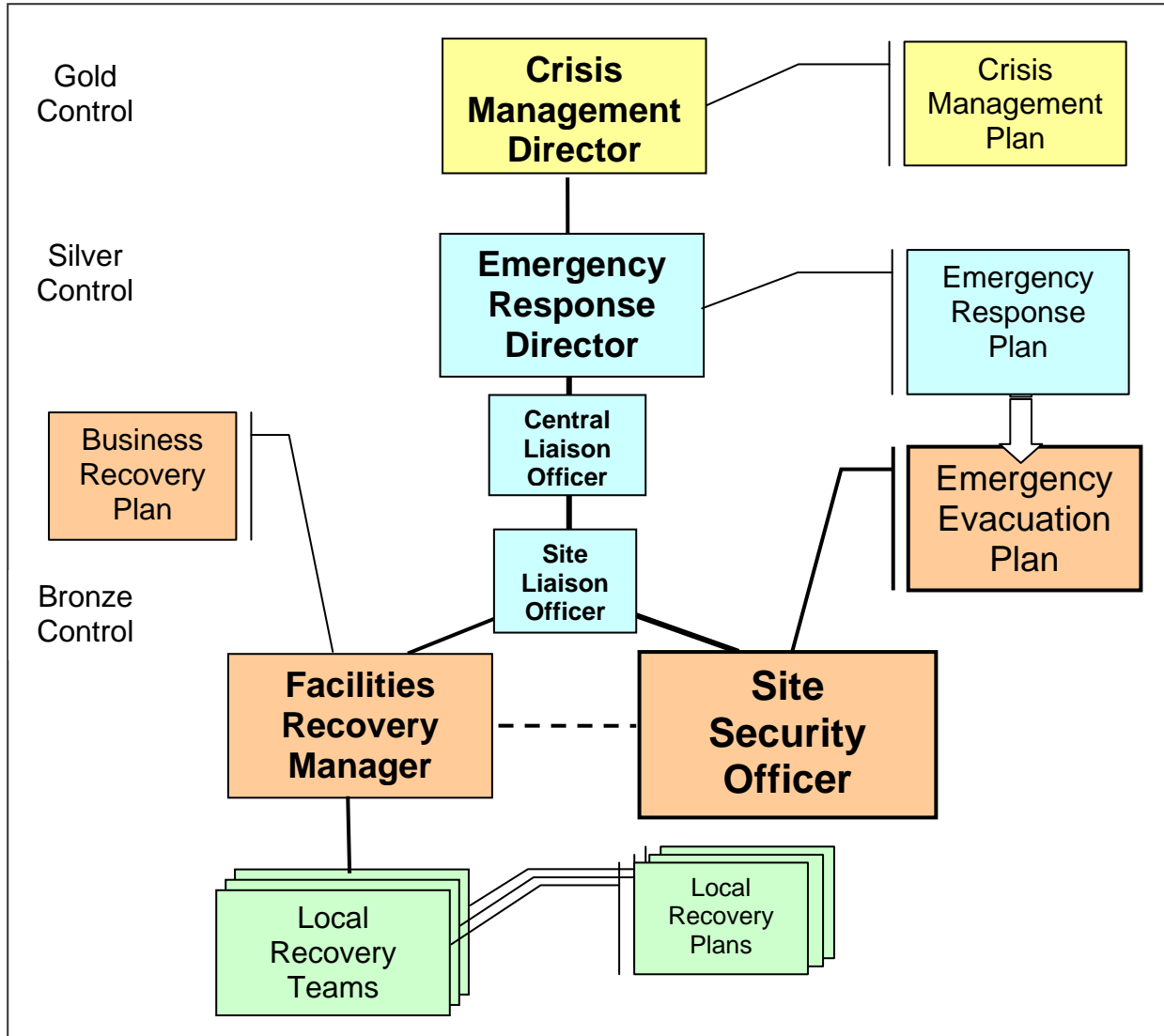
*Information in italics* is variable and needs to be modified before the event.

*Information in red italics* is dynamic and needs to be adjusted during the event.

Information areas left blank need to be completed before the event.

Information areas coloured grey need to be completed after the evacuation.

## A.2 Contingency Plan Hierarchy



The Emergency Evacuation Plan is a special section of the overall Emergency Response Plan. The Evacuation section deals specifically with evacuation of the premises or location under emergency conditions.

Emergency conditions apply whenever there is a realistic threat to the health and safety of personnel either directly through environmental risks or indirectly as a consequence of damage or threatened damage to the structure of the building or neighbouring buildings.

The essence of a successful Emergency Evacuation is

1. The recognition and substantiation of a realistic threat to the health or safety of personnel without delay
2. The immediate choice of a safe escape strategy
3. Rapid dissemination of the Evacuation Notice in a manner that ensures everybody knows where to assemble and how to get there
4. Managing the evacuation in a manner that reduces delays and minimises the risk

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## **A.2.1 Liaison with Central Command and Control**

An Emergency Evacuation, or the consideration of such an action, is a significant event that should be immediately escalated to Central Command and Control. Whilst it is, strictly speaking, a Bronze Level decision and activity; it is also very much a Silver and Gold Level concern. The implications are of crisis proportions and the Emergency Response Director must be kept informed of developments at all stages of the incident.

A Site Liaison Officer should be appointed to facilitate communications in both directions. The Site Liaison Officer is the local representative of Silver Control, working closely with the Site Security Officer who is the local Bronze Control.

### **Single point of contact**

There should be a single point of contact for on-site liaison. The Site Liaison Officer or the Site Security Officer should be clearly identifiable and in a prominent position. If they do have to be somewhere out of sight there is need for some temporary signs to indicate where they can be found.

Anyone who carries out liaison activities away from the site should report back to the same single point of contact. In this way the various messages and activities can be properly co-ordinated.

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## A.3 Evacuation Procedures

This section of the plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of those engaged in preparing for, declaring, organising and managing an Emergency Evacuation. The decision process for instigating an Emergency Evacuation is described together with the criteria for making the decision. The Alarm and Notification procedures are described, together with sample announcement messages.

### A.3.1 Roles and Responsibilities

All those who are likely to be engaged in carrying duties and tasks in connection with an Emergency Evacuation should be provided with high visibility jackets. They should don these jackets as soon as the alert is announced and continue to wear them until after the Stand Down.

#### A.3.1.1 Site Security Officer

The Site Security Officer is the Bronze level or operational controller with full responsibility and empowerment for the emergency evacuation planning and execution at *A Location*. He or she reports and is accountable to the Emergency Response Director in all matters relating to emergency evacuation. The role involves the following responsibilities: -

- Final Development of the Emergency Evacuation Plan from the template
- Maintenance of the Emergency Evacuation Plan
- Evaluation of any alarms or messages regarding threats to the health and safety of personnel at *A Location*
- Selection of the most appropriate Emergency Assembly Areas, Escape Routes, Exit Points and Exit Routes
- Announcement of the Emergency Evacuation Alert and Evacuation Notice
- Ensuring that all personnel are kept informed about the Emergency Evacuation Plan and its implications
- Invocation of the Emergency Evacuation procedure
- Liaison with the emergency services before during and after an incident
- Liaison with the Health and Safety Executive as and when required

#### A.3.1.2 Site Liaison Officer

The Site Liaison Officer is responsible for ensuring that the Central Liaison Officer is kept fully informed about all activities, decisions and concerns regarding Emergency Evacuation at *A Location*. He or she is also responsible for relaying any news, commands, decisions or advice from the Central Liaison Officer to personnel on site.

Responsibilities include: -

- Establishing contact and maintaining a dialogue with the Central Liaison Officer immediately there is any intimation of an Imminent Catastrophic Event
  - Where this is not possible, direct contact should be established with the Central Emergency Response Director. Dialogue should be maintained until contact is established with the Central Liaison Officer
- Assisting the Site Security Officer in managing an actual evacuation

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## **A.3.1.3 Head Emergency Marshal**

The Head Emergency Marshal has overall responsibility for managing and controlling the flow of people away from their place of work to the Emergency Assembly Area. He or she exercises this responsibility by deploying, briefing and equipping a team of Emergency Marshals to assist the evacuees at suitable points along the Exit and Escape Routes.

The Head Emergency Marshal reports directly to the Site Security Officer. His or her responsibilities include: -

- Maintaining familiarity with all of the Emergency Exit Routes, Exit Points, Escape routes and Assembly Areas
- Assisting the Site Security Officer with the selection of Marshalling Points along the Emergency Exit and Escape Routes. They may consider it necessary to appoint Emergency Floor Marshals who would act as message relay points to ensure that Emergency Alerts and Evacuation Notices are received and understood by all personnel
- Selection or recruitment of sufficient and suitable Emergency Marshals to man the Marshalling Points
- Instructing the Emergency Marshals as to their duties and limitations on a regular basis
- Briefing the Emergency Marshals at the outset of an emergency, if there is time and good reason to do so. In the absence of a briefing all marshals
- Issuing updates or changes of instructions to Emergency Marshals if the situation demands it
- Debriefing the Emergency Marshals after Stand Down and feeding any lessons learned back to the Site Security Officer and the Site Liaison Officer

## **A.3.1.4 Emergency Marshals**

Emergency Marshals are responsible for ensure that everyone reaches safety without endangering others or exposing themselves to unnecessary risks or dangers. They should be posted at exit points and no exit points during the actual evacuation.

As soon as everyone appears to be clear of the building they should quickly check that their own area is clear before moving to the Emergency Assembly Area.

Once they are at the Emergency Assembly Area they should check to make sure that everyone is OK and help anyone who might be injured.

The Emergency Marshals as a group are responsible for: -

- Ensuring that the whole evacuation runs smoothly
- Ensuring that nobody uses the wrong exit point or escape path
- Checking that the building is clear before they leave
- Reassuring people and keeping the situation as calm as possible
- Handling any out of line situations that might occur
- Assisting anyone who sustains an injury and arranging for (or providing) first aid where necessary

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## A.3.2 Decision Process

The need to evacuate the premises has to be judged according to a pre-determined set of criteria which are outlined below. If there is any doubt about the need to evacuate the premises the default is to proceed with the evacuation. The health and safety of our people must take precedence over all other considerations.

The Site Security Officer (or whoever is acting as his or her deputy) is empowered to make the final decisions regarding the need to evacuate as well as where and how to evacuate. He or she will try to establish the veracity of any warnings or alarm signals before committing to a full evacuation. However the priority is a rapid decision – delays may cost lives.

### A.2.2.1 Decision Criteria

An Emergency Evacuation should be launched as soon as it is known (or suspected)\* that there is an imminent\*\* threat that may:

- Cause structural damage to buildings in the immediate vicinity
- Cause harm or distress to the people in or near to a *location*

\* Known or suspected should be taken to mean more than a 50% possibility.

\*\* Imminent is taken to mean within the next hour.

## A.3.3 Alarm and Notification

If a representative of the company (such as the Site Security Officer) should receive information to the effect that there is a real or perceived then the company has a 'duty of care' to inform everybody. Thus we have a duty to provide a warning if there is a potential threat and a very clear duty to give them specific instructions about how to reach safety once the alert has been confirmed as an alarm or an actual emergency.

- An alert is any form of incoming message or discovery that suggests there is a possible threat to people or property. Until it is investigated or verified it remains an alert i.e. a message or information received.
- An evacuation alert announcement informs everyone that an alert is under investigation and that they should prepare themselves to evacuate the premises BUT they should not take any other action until they receive further instructions about the nature of the emergency and the evacuation route.
- An alarm is the formal announcement that there is a real threat and emergency actions should be taken.
  - A fire alarm is an announcement that there is a fire (or signs of a fire) and everyone should exit the building.
  - An emergency evacuation alarm is an announcement that there is a rather more serious threat that involves evacuation to an emergency assembly area at some distance from the building that is now under threat. An emergency alarm should include notification of which escape route and assembly area has been selected as safe to use.
- An emergency is the status that is recognised once the alert has been verified and the threat is considered to be real and imminent. A state of emergency should be declared and the emergency alarm should be given immediately.

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## **A.6.1.1 Evacuation Alert**

As soon as an alert is received all staff and visitors to *A Location* should be advised of the situation and how to behave whilst the matter is being investigated. This message should be broadcast by all those means that are available. I.e. Public address systems, phone calls to floor marshals, intranet messages or a pre-agreed signal such as an intermittent alarm bell or klaxon.

## **A.6.1.2 A sample Evacuation Alert Message**

'Our security team are investigating a warning message that has been received. There may be nothing to it but you are advised to ensure that your personal belongings are close to hand as there may be a need to evacuate the building. We will advise you accordingly within the next 5 minutes. If there is an emergency evacuation notice please pay particular attention to the information you are given in regard to the escape exit, escape route and emergency assembly area.'

## **A.6.1.3 A sample Evacuation Notice**

'This is an emergency. Please leave *A location* immediately and make for the Emergency Assembly Area which is at (the selected area see section A.7.1 on page 12). Leave the building by the emergency exits at the *front/rear/north side/east side/west side/south side*. Follow the emergency escape route to the Emergency Assembly Area. *Then describe the route briefly.*'

This evacuation notice should be repeated every 20 to 30 seconds for the first couple of minutes to ensure that everyone is fully aware of the emergency exit point, escape route and assembly area.

## **A.3.4 Marshalling**

Emergency Marshals should be posted at each Emergency Exit and any other critical points along the Emergency Exit Routes. Their primary purpose is to ensure that the evacuation proceeds in a steady manner without panic or overcrowding and to resolve any problems that may arise. They are also responsible for ensuring that the routes and exit points are kept clear of obstructions at all times.

Where required to do so, Emergency Marshals will also be responsible for ensuring that everyone within their allocated area of responsibility is fully aware of any Emergency Evacuation Alert messages or Notices of Evacuation.

## **A.3.5 Disabled Persons**

It is the responsibility of every manager who employs a person with a handicap or a disability to ensure that a buddy is appointed to assist them in any emergency situation. The manager has a duty to make all the details of any such arrangement to the Site Security Officer for inclusion within the Emergency Escape Plan. The Site Security Officer will then assign a space within an internal refuge for that person and their buddy. The manager should then explain the details of these arrangements to the disabled person and their buddy

N.B. If the disabled person is in a wheel chair they will require a refuge space of not less than 1 square metre.

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## **A.4 Liaison with the Emergency Services**

The Site Security Officer is responsible for liaison with the emergency services before during and after an incident. He or she should make early contact with the on-site leader of each of the emergency services in attendance and remain accessible to them throughout the incident. This relationship is at the Operational or Bronze level of command and will be concerned with practical issues.

They will be particularly interested in knowing about any hazards and whether everybody is out of the building and accounted for.

Site Security Officers should make themselves known to the local Fire Prevention Officer and the local Crime Reduction Officer as soon as they are appointed.

In a major incident there may also be a Strategic or Silver level liaison between our Central Command and Control Centre and the emergency services headquarters or Incident Control Centre. This is covered in the main body of the Emergency Response Plan. The link between the site and Central Command is via our Site Liaison Officer and the Central Liaison Officer.

## **A.5 Emergency Evacuation Process and Timing**

Any rational process for emergency evaluation and evacuation has to be based on certain assumptions or parameters. We also have to recognise that the process involves a series of steps, which must be taken in quick succession. There can be no allowances for hesitation. Our process is based upon the following parameters:

1. There will be an evacuation window of up to 20 minutes.
  - This is the time from the first alarm to the incident occurrence.
2. Emergency Assembly Areas are within 5 minutes walk from the target building.
3. Exit time is 4 minutes.
  - This is the time allowed to get everyone out of the target building.

Whilst we cannot verify or influence the duration of the evacuation window, we can take steps to check the other two parameters.

### **A.5.1 Target Times**

Throughout the Emergency Evacuation process we have allocated Target Times for each stage. These timings are in relation to the very start of the emergency situation when the first alarm or alert message is received. We call this moment the 'Start of Emergency Time' or 'ET Zero'.

If we meet all of the Target Times then everybody should reach safety within 20 minutes of ET Zero. If we should fail to meet any of them, then we can estimate the time that will be taken for everyone to reach the selected assembly area.

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## A.6 Emergency Evacuation Procedure

Step	Action	Target Time
1	An alarm message is received and passed directly to the Site Security Officer, the person with overall responsibility for security and safety. This is not to be confused with a guard who does or represents security - we mean the one who is security	2 minutes from ET Zero
2	A staff warning is issued advising everybody that an emergency is being investigated and they should ensure they have their personal belongings with them. See section A.6.1.1 on page 9	
3	Meanwhile the Site Security Officer will try to verify whether there is a genuine emergency. This may be a call to the police or a review of the known facts and the current state of alert.	4 minutes from ET Zero
4	Site Security Officer then confirms the alarm message and invokes the emergency evacuation procedure.	5 minutes from ET Zero
5	Site Security Officer selects the assembly area and escape route based on the information to hand. The default area should be indicated in section A.7.1 on page 12.	6 minutes from ET Zero
6	Evacuation is announced to members of staff by the most appropriate means. If there is no PA system the message may need to be cascaded via floor marshals. The message should state clearly which exits to use, which routes to use and which assembly area to use.	8 minutes from ET Zero
7	Everyone leaves the building via the selected exits and security staff or floor marshals check the building is clear before leaving. Everyone proceeds to the emergency assembly area using the selected route. Security staff and floor marshals follow immediately the building is clear.	12 minutes from ET Zero
8	The whole group gathers at the emergency assembly area awaiting further instructions. All heads of departments should conduct a head count or identify anyone missing from those who were known to be in the building. Everyone else should seek out fellow members of their department, make themselves known and remain together within their own group.	18 minutes from ET Zero

### A.6.1 Exceptions

- If the original alarm message is from a trusted official source, such as the police or fire service, then the security officer should immediately invoke the emergency evacuation procedure (step 5), without needing to verify that the alarm is genuine.
- If the original alarm is not confirmed as a genuine emergency situation then the Site Security Officer should issue a stand down message so everyone can return to their normal duties with confidence.

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## A.7 Evacuation

### A.7.1 Choice of Assembly Area

The Site Security Officer is responsible for selecting the most suitable Emergency Assembly Area (EAA) before issuing an Emergency Evacuation Notice. The choice will depend on a number of factors that have to be taken into account. It is essential therefore that the Site Security Officer and all of the alternates or deputies should familiarise themselves with all of the assembly areas and escape routes and should inspect them on a regular basis. The purpose of the inspection is two-fold. Firstly, it is to ensure that the routes and areas are still available and safe. Secondly, it is to ensure that the decision makers are aware of all the nuances that may affect the final choice.

The choice depends on the following major factors as well as any number of lesser considerations that will be taken into account at the subconscious level.

#### A.7.1.1 Major Factors affecting the Choice

- The direction of the threat, (IF IT IS KNOWN). The correct EEA is the one farthest from the threat
- The weather conditions at the time of the evacuation. The availability of shelter at the EEA may be an influencing factor
- The availability of toilet facilities at, or near, the EEA should also be taken into account
- The time of the day for the evacuation. The availability of daylight and artificial lighting at the EEAs may affect the choice
- The availability of food and drink at, or near, the EEA may be factor if it is close to lunch time

Where the direction of the threat is unknown and other factors do not indicate a particular choice then the default option is to use the Preferred Emergency Assembly Area which is at *Preferred EEA*.

### A.7.2 Choice of Exit and Escape Route

The Site Security Officer is also responsible for selecting the most suitable Emergency Exit Point or Points and Emergency Escape Routes.

The choice depends primarily upon the EEA that has been selected but there is also a need to consider a number of other factors.

- The direction of the threat, (IF IT IS KNOWN). The correct route that minimises the exposure to secondary effects such as blast damage
- The time of the day for the evacuation. The availability of daylight and artificial lighting throughout the route may affect the choice
- Roadworks, building works or any other temporary obstructions that may apply at the time of the evacuation
- Weather conditions if one Exit Point or Escape Route provides better shelter than another.
- Security cordons that are in place or are about to be imposed. You will need to be advised by the Police in this regard. If they have not expressly restricted your choice then you are free to make an independent choice

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## **A.7.3 Emergency Communication with Staff**

Once the all the members of staff and visitors have gathered at the Emergency Assembly Area they will need to be informed of what to do next and where to go. They will also need to be told when and how they will be given further instructions or advice about the situation as it develops.

Heads of Departments should be briefed by the Site Security Officer or a deputy and then they should meet with their own people at the EAA and explain the situation to them and deal with their questions as best they can.

## **A.8 Invacuation**

There are occasions when evacuation is more dangerous than remaining in situ. There are also those who may not be able to evacuate the building. This may be because they are disabled or because of the nature of their duties in connection with ensuring the safety of the other people.

- Invacuation is the special form of evacuation that seeks to make use of internal refuges. It is moving people to a safe place within the building rather than exposing them to the dangers or difficulties of moving out into the open.

Internal refuges may not be large enough to accommodate everyone so it will be necessary to pre-allocate the space available to those with special needs. See section A.11 on page 15 for further details

## **A.9 Stand Down and Return**

Once the threat has passed or the incident has occurred there are three options to be considered and the decision has to be relayed to all of the assembled personnel at each of the assembly areas or internal refuges.

- Return to work
- Go home and report for work as usual on the next working day
- Go home and await further news

### **A.9.1.1 Debriefings**

If the incident was a false alarm then everybody should be told what happened and why it was considered necessary to evacuate them. They should also be asked what they think of the procedure and whether there are any useful learning points to be captured and incorporated into our future plans and procedures.

If there was an actual incident then there should be a general debriefing where the whole event is explored and explained and everyone has the chance to talk about what they saw, heard and felt. Again, any learning points need to be captured and a report should be published summarising what happened and what has been learned.

Soon after the general debriefing managers of individual units should run a more intimate debriefing where all the members of the team are given the chance to explore what happened and how they reacted. This second debriefing is principally for the benefit of the people rather than to discover what really happened.

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## A.10 Evacuation Areas and Routes

### A.10.1 Assembly Areas

<b>Location</b> (This is the Preferred or Default EAA)	<b>Meeting Point</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>Meeting Point</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>Meeting Point</b>

### A.10.2 Escape Routes

<b>Exit Point</b>	<b>Route</b> (This is the Preferred or Default Route)	<b>Assembly Area</b>
<b>Exit Point</b>	<b>Route</b>	<b>Assembly Area</b>
<b>Exit Point</b>	<b>Route</b>	<b>Assembly Area</b>

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## A.11 Internal Refuges

These are designated 'safe spaces' within the building that may be used as emergency shelters. They are of limited capacity and are only intended to be used for short periods of time. Each of these internal refuges has a nominated marshal who is responsible for ensuring that the entrances are closed when everyone has assembled. They are also responsible for ensuring that access routes are kept clear at all times.

The refuge marshal should be equipped with a 'walkie-talkie' to communicate with the Security Officer and other marshals. Alternatively there should be a dedicated telephone inside the refuge area.

Refuge A		
Location	Marshal	Capacity
		<i>'x' people</i>

Refuge B		
Location	Marshal	Capacity
		<i>'x' people</i>

Refuge C		
Location	Marshal	Capacity
		<i>'x' people</i>

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## A.11.1 Assigned Invacuees

This is a list of all those who are assigned a place in the internal refuges. Some of the invacuees will need assistance, in which case they will have a nominated buddy who will accompany them and attend to their needs and comfort during the evacuation period. The category is the justification for inclusion of individuals, such as 'wheel chair', 'disabled', 'security staff', 'floor marshal' etc.

### A.11.1.1 Refuge Location A

Unit	Invacuee	Category	Buddy

### A.11.1.2 Refuge Location B

Unit	Invacuee	Category	Buddy

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## A.12 Evacuation Control Team

### A.12.1 Head Marshal

Role	Name	Internal Phone	Mobile
Head Marshal			
Alternate			
Alternate			
Alternate			

### A.12.2 Marshals

Role	Name	Internal Phone	Mobile

### A.12.3 Marshalling Points

Exit Points	Escape Route Points	Assembly Areas

