Pollution Incident Response Management

BAI Communications designs, builds and operates highly available communications networks across the globe.

In NSW, BAI Communications maintains a resilient, high availability radio communications network to provide services to Government agencies and Emergency Service Organisations. A critical part of this network is reserve power, which requires DC battery power to maintain equipment for a minimum of 10 hours under a mains power failure.

Due to this requirement, BAI Communications has an Environment Protection Licence (EPL) with the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), to transport used batteries from network sites to recycling facilities. As such, the EPA requires that BAI Communications maintains a plan to respond to and manage pollution incidents that should they arise, may risk harm to the health or safety of people or the environment. In the event that this plan is activated, designated BAI employees will carry out the following actions:

Notification of Relevant Authorities

The following authorities will be notified in the order presented:

1. If the incident presents an immediate threat to human health, property, or the surrounding environment immediately call '000'
2. Fire and Rescue NSW, the NSW Police and the NSW Ambulance Service are the first responders, as they are responsible for controlling and containing incidents.
3. Environment Protection Authority – call 13 15 55
4. NSW Ministry of Health via the local Public Health Unit – call 1300 066 055 to be directed to the appropriate local Public Health Unit (for the location of the incident)
5. WorkCover Authority – 13 10 50
6. Local authority (usually the local council) where the incident has occurred
7. Fire and Rescue NSW – 1300 729 579 (only required if the incident did not require calling '000' in the first instance)

Communicating with the Local Community

Community notification will usually be led by the incident controller from emergency services (NSW Police Force or Fire and Rescue NSW).

However if the incident has not required calling emergency services on '000' then designated BAI employees will determine (through consultation with relevant stakeholders) if any community notification is necessary, and if so, who will have overall responsibility for this communication during the incident response. This responsibility includes identifying people who live or work near the incident and how to keep them informed of relevant matters.