



Riots and Civil Commotion Preparation Guide



Around the world, riots and civil disturbances have occurred frequently and have caused considerable damage to company's assets. These incidents also cause partial or total interruption of operations. Adequate preparation to deal with events of this nature can significantly reduce the material and business impact to companies. **Is your company ready?**

This guide is a useful tool to understand the risks associated with riots and civil commotion, and to assist your company in implementing measures to mitigate losses arising from such events.

Understanding the hazard

Riots and civil disturbances are events usually resulting from the dissatisfaction or demands of a group of people who, in an often uncontrolled, violent, and destructive way, express frustrations about unmet wishes, according to their perspective.

Usually, riots and civil disturbances are linked to systemic risks. In the vast majority of cases, triggers are difficult to detect in advance. The geographical scope of such occurrences, and therefore the possibility of concretely evaluating the exposure to which a company is subject, is also difficult to estimate. However, it is a fact that the greatest susceptibilities affect properties located in urban areas. Riots and

civil disturbances may also occur after large natural hazard events such as floods and hurricanes.

Material damage is the most obvious consequence of acts involving riots and civil commotion. Consequential damage, which impacts the operational continuity of the business, and therefore causes loss of profits, is also an important concern. Even without inflicting direct physical damage, riots and disturbances can limit or prevent access to the company's facilities, causing an interruption to the supply of raw materials or basic utilities, and hampering the flow of finished products, among other things.



Recently, Latin America, Europe and Asia registered popular demonstrations, political disturbances and clashes that left a trail of destruction, when vehicles were burned, stores were looted, and public and private property was damaged.

Emergency and recovery plan

Implement a formal emergency and recovery plan that foresees potential situations involving riots and civil disturbances, and the impact on the company's operations. The plan should establish measures that aim to mitigate the direct and indirect consequences and promote the resumption of operations in the shortest possible time. The following measures should be incorporated into the plan:

- Identify the main exposures to the risk of riots such as proximity to: important traffic arteries; roads with a history of public demonstrations, protests, or marches; football stadiums; headquarters of NGOs and unions; prisons; and places where public events are held.
- Establish an information early warning system that allows for the identification of dates and times of events that may be considered as potential riots or disturbances. Use reliable communication networks and social media.
- Establish a direct line of communication with the local police and fire department.
- Develop and train a rapid response team. The team should include security and surveillance personnel prepared to take action during emergency situations.
- Establish safe access and egress routes for the mobilization of employees and goods.
- For industrial plants:
 - Develop a plan to ensure the continuity of supply of raw materials and other supplies.
 - Establish a schedule for the entry and exit of raw materials, supplies and finished products, before demonstrations take place (if scheduled in advance).
 - Implement a set of measures to ensure the provision of basic utilities, such as electricity, water, steam and natural gas before, during, and after the course of an event.
 - If there is a risk of prolonged restriction of access or even significant damage to a given location, provide for measures that facilitate the redirection of production processes to other locations in the same group, or to third parties, through advance contracting.

- Implement a routine of annual simulations, aiming to test the actions detailed in the plan. Use simulations to verify the need for adjustments to the plan.
- Establish a structured process to ensure that the plan is periodically updated.
- For more details on how to establish emergency and recovery plans, in addition to security measures, **NFPA 1600** – Standard on Continuity, Emergency and Crisis Management and **NFPA 730** – Guide for Premises Security, provide an excellent basis on both topics.

In case of exposure and imminent risk

Generic precautions

- Ensure that first aid kits and adequate salvage materials (tarps, plywood, duct tape and fasteners) are available.
- Verify that property security systems such as alarms and sensors against intrusion, electric fences, CCTV monitoring, access control systems, in addition to fire alarm systems, are in operation and remain so during any event.
- Ensure that fire protection systems and their components are operational.
- Verify that windows and façade openings are properly protected.
- Ensure that chains, padlocks, bars, locks, doors and gates are in good condition.
- Protect fire protection system pipes and valves if exposed and located close to public roads. The aim is to ensure that protection systems remain in operating condition before, during, and after the course of disturbances.
- At night, provide lightning for external building areas, especially at access points and windows. Also, guard rounds should be performed by security personnel.
- Avoid using public roads to park company and employee vehicles. Park all vehicles inside the premises or in protected parking lots.
- Ensure that alternative electricity sources are operational. These include emergency lighting system and emergency generators.
- Prepare to block all access points to the company's facilities. Special attention should be given to points where there is greater vulnerability.



An emergency and recovery action plan should be implemented in order to anticipate measures to deal with the potential impact of riots and civil disturbances. It is important to establish a line of direct communication with the police and the fire department.

Prevention and protection measures – Industrial plants

- Whenever necessary, carefully observe the procedures for safe shutdown and safe restart of process and utilities machinery and equipment. Special attention should be given to equipment that operates under high temperature, high pressure, or uses hazardous substances, such as flammable gases or liquids, and combustible dusts.
- In order to deal with unforeseen complications involving any production or utility equipment, and if the physical integrity of employees and contractors can be ensured, a minimum number of essential maintenance personnel should be kept at the premises before, during, and after riots and civil disturbances take place.
- Keep members of the emergency organization alert and ready to act in case of any abnormality. Take the opportunity to review emergency procedures and instructions on how to contact the fire department.
- Protect pipes, ducts and valves connected to process or utility supply equipment (such as natural gas), especially if exposed and close to public roads. If necessary, temporarily seal and cease their use.

- Relocate or protect mobile equipment and any outdoor storage if near potential demonstration routes.
- Special attention should be given to vinyl canvas or inflatable warehouses and other similar “temporary” storage buildings, constructed of light combustible materials, especially if accessible to protesters. Relocate goods stored in such warehouses to a safe and inaccessible location.

After the occurrence of riots and civil disturbances

In the event of trespassing and/or damage to the company’s assets, the measures listed below offer guidance to expedite the resumption of operations.

Initial assessment

- Consider that access to the facilities may have been impaired by damage to company property, damage to public roads, or even by interdiction by the authorities.
- Contact the authorities having jurisdiction and report what happened.
- Assess the condition of buildings and structures prior entering them. Make sure that structural integrity is preserved.
- While entering facilities that have been trespassed and vandalized, use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE). Always be accompanied.
- Stay away from potential hazards, such as energized electrical cables, broken glass, sharp metal pieces, areas with leaks or spills of hazardous materials, flammable liquids or gases, and unstable areas which might be at risk of structural collapse.
- Ensure that the smoking ban is in effect for all areas.
- Document any damage found.
- If it becomes evident that there will be a need for prolonged interruption of operations, activate the business contingency and recovery plan.

Cleaning and repair

- As soon as the security of areas, buildings, equipment and structures has been verified, start cleaning activities immediately.
- Check that the fire protection systems are in good operating condition. Provide for immediate repair if damage is detected in any protection system.
- As soon as possible, start salvaging activities for raw materials, in-process and finished product storage, and equipment.
- Segregate damaged storage and equipment from those that can be salvaged or recovered.
- Establish repair priorities. Focus on repairing and maintaining the integrity of roofs, doors, gates, external walls, and access control equipment.
- Before restarting operations, carefully evaluate if dangerous processes can be safely restarted, as well as if precautions need to be taken to restart other equipment and auxiliary service systems.
- For recovery and repair work that generates heat or sparks, such as welding, cutting or grinding, use a formal hot work permit system, always considering required precautions.
- Avoid the accumulation of combustible materials and debris inside buildings.

If you would like to find out more about this or other loss prevention and control related matter, contact our **Risk Engineering Services** team.



In case of damage to property, report what happened to the authorities having jurisdiction. When entering the affected area, take due care, as the integrity of buildings and structures may have been compromised.

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