

Profile: Chemical incident specialist

Required Qualifications

Education

Degree in chemistry, chemical engineering, environmental health, medicine or a related discipline plus post-graduate qualifications or proven equivalent experience in public health, environmental health, medical toxicology or chemical incident management.

Experience

- Considerable experience in the rapid assessment and public health management of chemical incidents and emergencies;
- Specialized knowledge and practical experience in (i) medical toxicology, (ii) environmental toxicology, (iii) environmental risk assessment, (iv) epidemiology, or (iv) analytical toxicology;
- Knowledge of WHO, UN and NGO humanitarian and development community.

Personal skills

- Maturity, initiative, tact and a high sense of responsibility;
- Willingness and ability to work in hardship environment;
- Readily available for deployment in emergency situation;
- Ability to work in close collaboration with different nationalities and cultural backgrounds;
- Excellent knowledge of English or French with a good knowledge of the other. Other UN languages would be an advantage.

Terms of Reference

Overall objectives

To facilitate a timely and effective public health response to environmental health emergencies with particular focus on chemical incidents, and assessment of other environmental health factors impacting on health.

Specific objectives

- To assess the environmental health situation with particular focus on health effects resulting from chemical release;
- To provide technical advice and support to the Ministry of Health in dealing with the public health effects of chemical incidents and environmental emergencies;
- To assist in the design and implementation of plans to manage health risks resulting from a chemical incident;
- To coordinate with other partners/actors to ensure harmonized response to chemical incidents and other environmental health emergencies.

Main tasks

During the response phase and in collaboration with the national authorities:

- Conduct rapid health assessment (to assess situation, priority needs, available resources, gaps and risks);
- Propose, recommend and provide first solutions based on the outcome of the assessment; provide advice to prevent and mitigate health risks; promote the implementation of these measures;
- Identify, coordinate and collaborate with main partners/actors;
- Participate in the conduct of resource mobilization activities (draft proposals, including flash appeals, CERF, others);
- Establish information management and communication systems, as relevant to the chemical incident including data collection, reporting, information exchange;
- Advise on risk and crisis communication, in relation to the chemical incident, including dealing with the media, if necessary;
- Provide feedback at the end of the mission, including lessons learnt.