1. PURPOSE
To provide information and guidance for incidents involving waste management (including waste transfer) sites.

APPLICATION
Applies to all TFS operational personnel.

2. GENERAL SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS
Most waste sites prohibit disposal of quantities of flammable, dangerous and/or hazardous materials. However, some community and industrial waste centres contain small quantities of these products; and may also contain infectious and/or odorous products. Accordingly, all fires at waste management sites should be treated as involving these products.

Specific safety considerations for waste sites are as follows:
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) must be worn with universal precautions being observed where appropriate (see T.8 PPE & DECONTAMINATION publications)
- Take particular caution when traversing tip sites. Fires can smoulder for some time before breaking out; resulting in the tip-face being undermined with a possibility of caving-in
- Care should be taken when working near heavy machinery operating on waste sites
- Consider access by 4x4 due to wet conditions in winter, and dry/clay conditions in summer
- Quantities of dangerous (e.g. asbestos waste) or infectious materials (e.g. bio-medical waste) are delivered on-site during working hours and are buried soon after arrival
- Extreme caution should be exercised around wet sullage and sludge ponds (often with a crust over the surface)
- Methane collection devices may be present; and could impede firefighting operations.

Note: TFS response to waste management sites and transfer stations is to contain any fire from endangering exposures and/or escaping into surrounding areas. In conjunction with TFS, waste management staff are responsible for the long-term management of a fire incident. It will be necessary to assess the risk to firefighters against the benefits of trying to extinguish a waste site fire.

3. PRE-INcIDENT PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS
The District Officer(s) and responsible personnel should ensure that planning occurs for local response to incidents involving waste management sites and transfer stations. This may be achieved by identifying specific site areas, conducting pre-incident inspections and other familiarisation activities, including training and simulated exercises.

Like the majority of public infrastructure, it remains important to establish and maintain contact with the owner and/or site manager to undertake these activities, whereby identified risks can be discussed and addressed by owner and/or site manager.
4. TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Incident Controller (IC) (and/or crew leader) must adapt prior knowledge and experience to the specific incident as each situation may present unique and at times conflicting challenges. The IC must undertake a size-up of the onsite conditions to identify all of the hazards and to assess the risks involved in each. The IC must then develop and prioritise the incident objectives and apply tactical strategies to control and manage the incident based on the principles of RECEO. An Incident Action Plan (course of action) should be established, implemented and communicated in accordance with TFS briefing formats. The IC must continuously review and re-access the strategies as the incident progresses and/or as new hazards develop. This could include reviewing the incident objectives.

The following tactical considerations apply to incidents involving waste management sites (and transfer stations):

- Where waste site staff are in attendance, IC should liaise with on site management. In particular, once liaison is established the contents and location of any hazardous/dangerous materials burial site(s) should be identified as soon as practical
- The responding officer is to notify the District Officer if hazardous materials are involved (see also “Site Specific” Emergency Management Plan, where available)
- Consider requirement for additional specialist resources (e.g. HAZMAT) if required
- Where an environmental risk has been identified, initiate containment strategies (in conjunction with HAZMAT procedures). In this instance, consider liaison with site environmental officers and/or local council representatives, EPA and TasPol
- In conjunction with TasPol, consider precautionary downwind evacuation where dense smoke is generated
- Any fire found on a tip face should be contained until the arrival of site staff who will arrange for machinery to remove, spread and/or bury the materials on fire
- Contain water run-off where possible
- For fires in garbage trucks (where safe to do so) may be transported to a tip site (or other designated waste area) and dealt with accordingly. A fire appliance should follow any such transport
- IC should continue to gather sufficient information to ensure containment and control of the emergency, including the maintenance of widespread situational awareness to personnel and FireComm (including external communication strategies).

5. POST-INCIDENT CONSIDERATIONS

The IC should:

- Ensure that overhaul is conducted and de-mobilisation of resources and de-escalation of the Incident Management System occurs
- Ensure on site decontamination occurs
- Ensure that the integrity of evidence at the scene is preserved, notify the Fire Investigation Officer as required and record all relevant information and observations
- Liaise with responsible party for site handover considerations
- Conduct an incident debrief and then a post-incident analysis, to identify improvements to procedures, training and equipment
- Initiate the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) de-briefing process as necessary.

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