

Method: Work on a construction building site settled within an industrial area required spreading of quick lime near the factory. A change of wind direction exposed a large numbers of labourers to calcium oxide emanations. The first dispatch of assistance consisted of two ambulances and one medical team. The director of medical assistance (DMA) also was notified and went to the scene. The intoxication was moderate and consisted of airway and eye irritation.

Initially, around 40 labourers showed up with these symptoms, but soon more than 100 labourers complained of cough and ocular irritation. An accurate triage was indispensable on the scene as to avoid a massive evacuation of the victims toward the hospitals, and in this way, impeding emergency medical services. The arrival on the site of an extra ambulance and a second medical team permitted the realization of the DMA directives, triage in an hour, and the evacuation started 1.08 hrs after the alert. Transportation of casualties was done by ambulances for four victims and 16 other victims were transported with the help of the minivan of the civil security. The major problem confronted during this incident was a hysterical panicking among the workers and only a few casualties really had the symptoms.

Results: Of the hundred or so labourers who arrived in the triage area, only 20 had to be evacuated. The last casualties left the scene 1.45 hrs after the alert and the DMA left 2.23 hrs after the start of the event.

Conclusions: An important number of casualties did not need evacuation, and an appropriate triage allows non-transport of people involved who otherwise would overwhelm the emergency services.

References

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Key words: calcium oxide; director; evacuation; lime; symptoms; triage

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Study of Stress among Rinsis Workers

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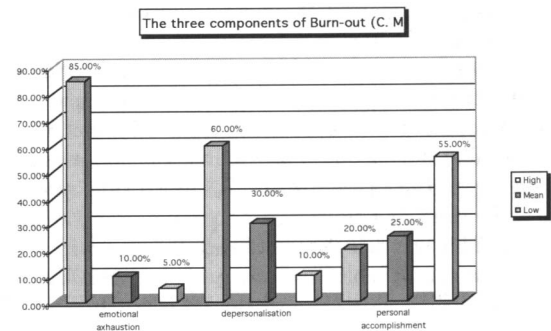
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Introduction: Rinsis (call centre for emergency needs, ambulance, firepersons, emergency medical team, etc.) services a population of about 1,350,000. The calls (about 1,400 each day) cause stress among workers. We evaluated the stress levels using several studies.

Methodology: First test of Derogatis is a list of 90 proposals. Participants must choose between 5 possible answers ("not at all", "a little", "sometimes", "often", "very often"). The score is compared with the score of witness population. The second test is the Maslach and Jackson test: 22 proposals permit choice between 6 frequency and 7 intensity. We established an emotional exhaustion coefficient, a depersonalisation coefficient, and a personal accomplishment coefficient.

Results: Score of was is 32.1 for the Rinsis and 62 for wit-

ness population. Test of Maslach and Jackson showed the following results:



Conclusions: The score of Derogatis indicates a better adaptation to the stress for Rinsis than for the witness population. The tests of Maslach and Jackson indicates a low score of emotional exhaustion with very few people who depersonalise relationships with callers. Their work represents a satisfying personal accomplishment for 55% of the Rinsis workers.

Key words: call center; dispatchers; emotions; relationships; Rinsis call center; stress

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The Sleipner Catamaran Incident—Norway, November 1999

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During the evening of 26 November 1999, the passenger catamaran vessel SLEIPNER, with 85 persons on board, ran aground in open sea near the west coast of Haugesund, Norway. It was dark and cold with strong winds and rough seas. The sea temperature was 9° C. The Search and Rescue (SAR) services were alarmed by a coastal radio station a few minutes after the event. At about 19:45 hours, the ship sunk, approximately 40 minutes after the grounding, and all persons on board were in the water. By means of helicopter and nearby boats, 69 were saved alive, 11 were found dead during the SAR operation the same evening, and five were found dead by underwater search.

The Coastal Radio Station alarmed the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre Southern Norway (RCC) and nearby vessels according to IMO procedures. The RCC also alarmed the Emergency Dispatch Centre at Haugesund Public Hospital. Health personnel from this hospital went out to a small harbour nearby the site of incident. A SAR-helicopter was dispatched from Sola Air Base at Stavanger, some 40 nm south of the scene of incident. Due to response time, the helicopter left base at 19:45 hours, arriving on scene at about 20:10 hours. Nearby vessels had just arrived. Both the helicopter and the surface vessels were