

CRISIS MANAGEMENT



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Scenario-Based Simulation

A few days before November 16, 2019, a ship owned by Canada Atlantic and Middle East (CAME) docked in Halifax, an average-sized city located in Nova Scotia, Canada. It was making its way to the city of Saguenay, in Québec, carrying 80,000 tonnes of petroleum and chemical products to be delivered to local factories. The ship's captain performed all of the necessary verifications in accordance with CAME and Transport Canada standards, based on the *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992*.¹

Despite these actions, when night time fell and the crew had just unboarded the ship to enjoy an evening of rest and recreation, the captain received an emergency call about a problem in the ship's operations room. A fire had just broken out and a column of smoke could be seen rising from the ship. Everything pointed to an electrical problem in the operations room. Firefighters and Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) operators were immediately on the scene to assess the situation. Although the possibility of a criminal act was considered, quick verifications by the RCMP, the firefighters and members of the ship's crew led to the following conclusions:

The fire was not of a criminal nature. It rather appeared to be the result of an electrical problem. CAME was notified of this problem at 11:48 p.m., Eastern Time. The equipment required to complete the trip was not damaged, so repairs to the operations room would be made once the ship had arrived at its final destination.

¹GOVERNMENT OF CANADA. *Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992*, [online] [<https://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/acts-regulations/acts-1992c34.htm>].

The captain therefore made the decision to leave Halifax earlier than expected to get a head start on the schedule of the coming weeks, given that:

- repairs needed to be made to the ship;
- the schedule for the coming weeks was very heavy; and
- the high tides in November could hamper navigation and delay the ship.

The ship thus began a race against the clock toward Saguenay in an attempt to reduce the delays that would result from the ship being repaired.

After several hours of sailing in the Saguenay Fjord and the St. Lawrence River, the unthinkable finally happened. As the ship was docking at the pier, a short circuit in the electrical system caused sparking to occur. A second fire then broke out near the petroleum containers and the tanks violently exploded one after another. In no time at all, the ship became a raging fire pit. Intense heat emanated from the flames, causing a major fire in the port and neighbouring buildings. Emergency services were immediately deployed, but their efforts were in vain. The fire spread too quickly and became uncontrollable. Witnesses at the scene were dumbfounded by what was happening, and panic spread throughout the downtown area. Flames engulfed the port and its buildings, and finally reached downtown. Buildings along boulevard Grande-Baie quickly became part of the fire pit. A few people managed to escape, whereas others weren't so lucky, including the ship's captain.

At 1:16 a.m. on November 16, 2019, the borough of La Baie, Saguenay, was on fire and several people were imprisoned by the flames.

The Stakeholders

Canada, Atlantic & Middle East (CAME)

Canada, Atlantic & Middle East (CAME) is a marine transportation company based in Moncton, New Brunswick. The company provides transportation of dangerous natural resources between the Middle East and Canada. It is owned by Edward Brown, a businessman who lives near Charlottetown, on Prince Edward Island.

CAME is responsible for ensuring the safety of its ships and complying with Transport Canada safety standards. CAME's reputation is less than sterling. Under its former name, Atlantic Oil Transportation, the company was already involved in 18 accidents, including 6 spills, in one year alone.

Transport Canada

Transport Canada is the government body responsible for setting safety management system standards for rail, road and marine transportation companies. Its principal role is to establish these standards. Transport Canada is also responsible for working with the various other provincial government bodies with regard to safety on their respective territories.

Transportation Safety Board of Canada

The Transportation Safety Board of Canada is an independent agency that is not under the authority of Transport Canada. Its mission is to advance transportation safety by investigating events that occur in transportation, including marine modes of transportation. As of November 16, 2019, it does not provide effective

procedures in its incident reports to ensure that the safety management systems work.²

Ville de Saguenay

Saguenay is a city in the Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean region north of Québec City and east of Alma. The city is located on the banks of the Saguenay River, which flows into the St. Lawrence River. In 2019 it had a population of nearly 150,000 residents.³

Its municipal council is not well known to the public outside the city and works in collaboration with the boroughs to manage municipal affairs. It is aware of the danger posed by the ships carrying dangerous substances that dock in its ports, and would like to be stricter with regard to this practice. However, this subject remains on the back burner to make room for other priorities, and a tragedy remains unthinkable among its citizens.

Ministère de l'Environnement et de la Lutte contre les changements climatiques du Québec

This provincial department is responsible for protecting Québec's ecosystems. When a tragedy that has an impact on the environment occurs, it must take all necessary measures to, among other things, limit contamination of the waters, ground and atmosphere, and rehabilitate the affected areas.⁴

² TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD OF CANADA. *Marine Transportation safety investigation M18C0105*, [Online], [<http://www.bst-tsb.gc.ca/eng/enquetes-investigations/marine/2018/M18C0105/M18C0105.html>].

³ WIKIPÉDIA. *Saguenay*, [Online], [[https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saguenay_\(ville\)](https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saguenay_(ville))].

⁴ MINISTÈRE DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT ET DE LA LUTTE CONTRE LES CHANGEMENTS CLIMATIQUES. *À propos du Ministère*, [Online], [<http://www.environnement.gouv.qc.ca/lac-megantic/>].

Ministère de la Sécurité publique du Québec

This department's mission is to ensure the safety of Quebecers under any circumstances. It deals with human tragedies or natural disasters in order to reduce the public's vulnerability.⁵ This is the government department that is at the front line of managing any crisis that jeopardizes public safety.

Mandate

You are working as consultants for the Ministère de la Sécurité publique in managing the marine crisis that occurred in the borough of La Baie, in Saguenay. We are in the wee hours of the morning of November 16, 2019, and you only have three hours to put together a concrete action plan that involves implementing a work team and drafting an action plan to help the people who have been affected by this disaster.

You are aware that several people have lost their lives in this tragedy, and that many others are fighting for theirs. You also know that significant amounts of dangerous substances are spilling into the water.

In your presentation, you must identify the main problems that the stakeholders faced and that worsened the situation. You must present what the stakeholders should have done to avoid having to go through a situation like this.

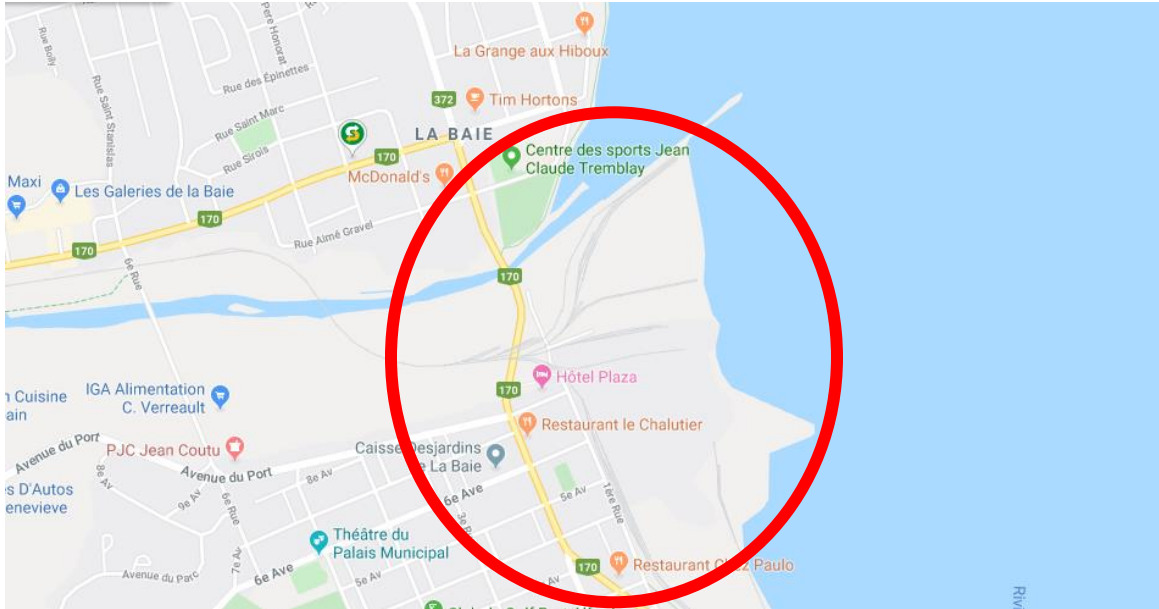
In addition, you must identify the best method to implement an effective work team. Who should be mobilized on site to manage the crisis? What are their respective roles? Refer to the stakeholders identified above, as well as Appendix B.

⁵ GOUVERNEMENT DU QUÉBEC. Ministère de la Sécurité publique, *Mission et vision*, [Online], [<https://www.quebec.ca/gouv/ministere/securite-publique/mission-et-mandats/>].

Lastly, be creative and reverse all previously established standards to provide help to citizens. What can the Ministère de la Sécurité publique do to help the disaster victims and the ecosystems?

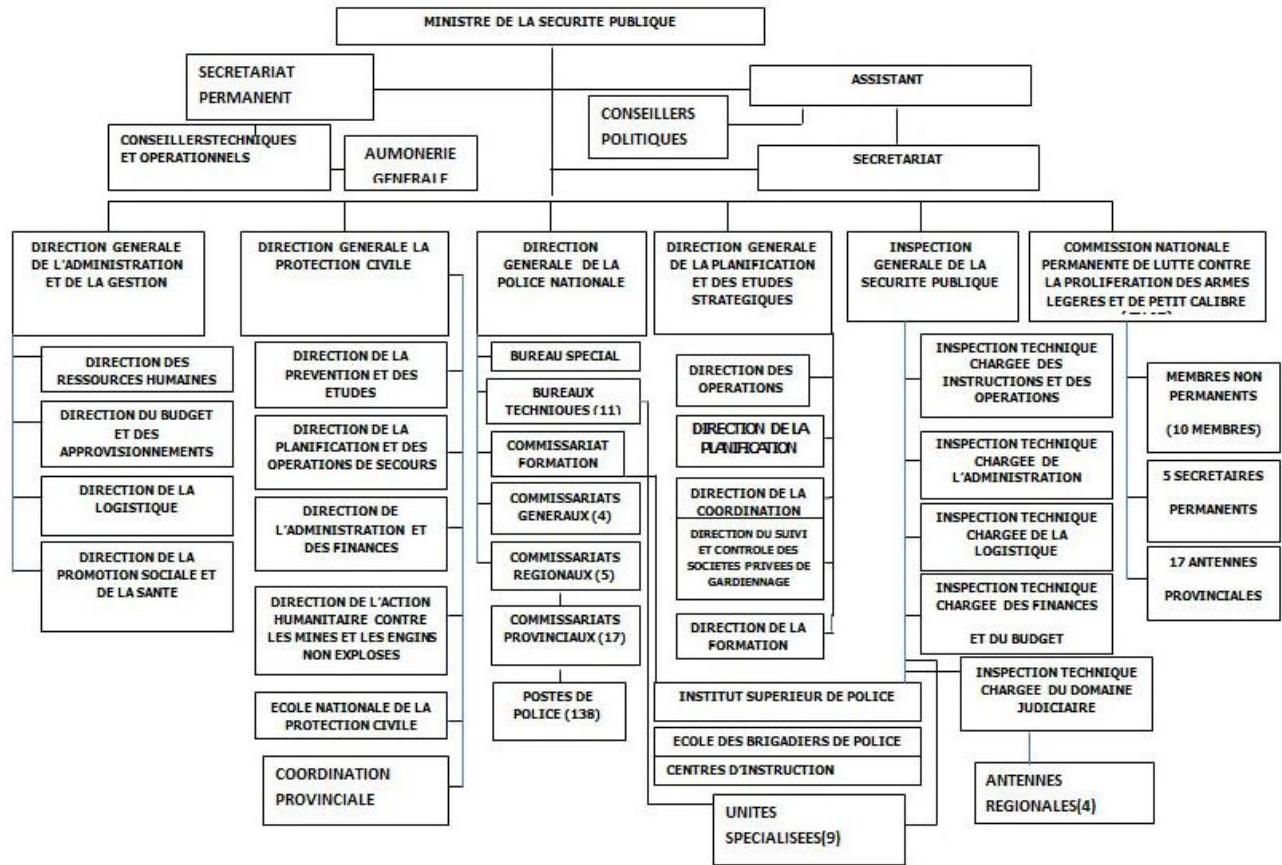
Lives are at stake. Don't worry about the numbers, but rather focus on presenting a tight timetable that deploys all of the necessary resources.

Appendix A: Maps of the Areas Affected by the Tragedy, Including the Disaster and Evacuated Areas⁶



⁶ GOOGLE MAPS. [Online], [<https://www.google.com/maps/@48.3317682,-70.8826485,14.27z>].

Appendix B: Organization Chart of the Ministère de la Sécurité publique⁷



⁷ MINISTÈRE DE LA SÉCURITÉ PUBLIQUE. *Organigramme*, [Online, available in French only], <http://www.securitepublique.gov.bi/images/organigramme.jpg>.