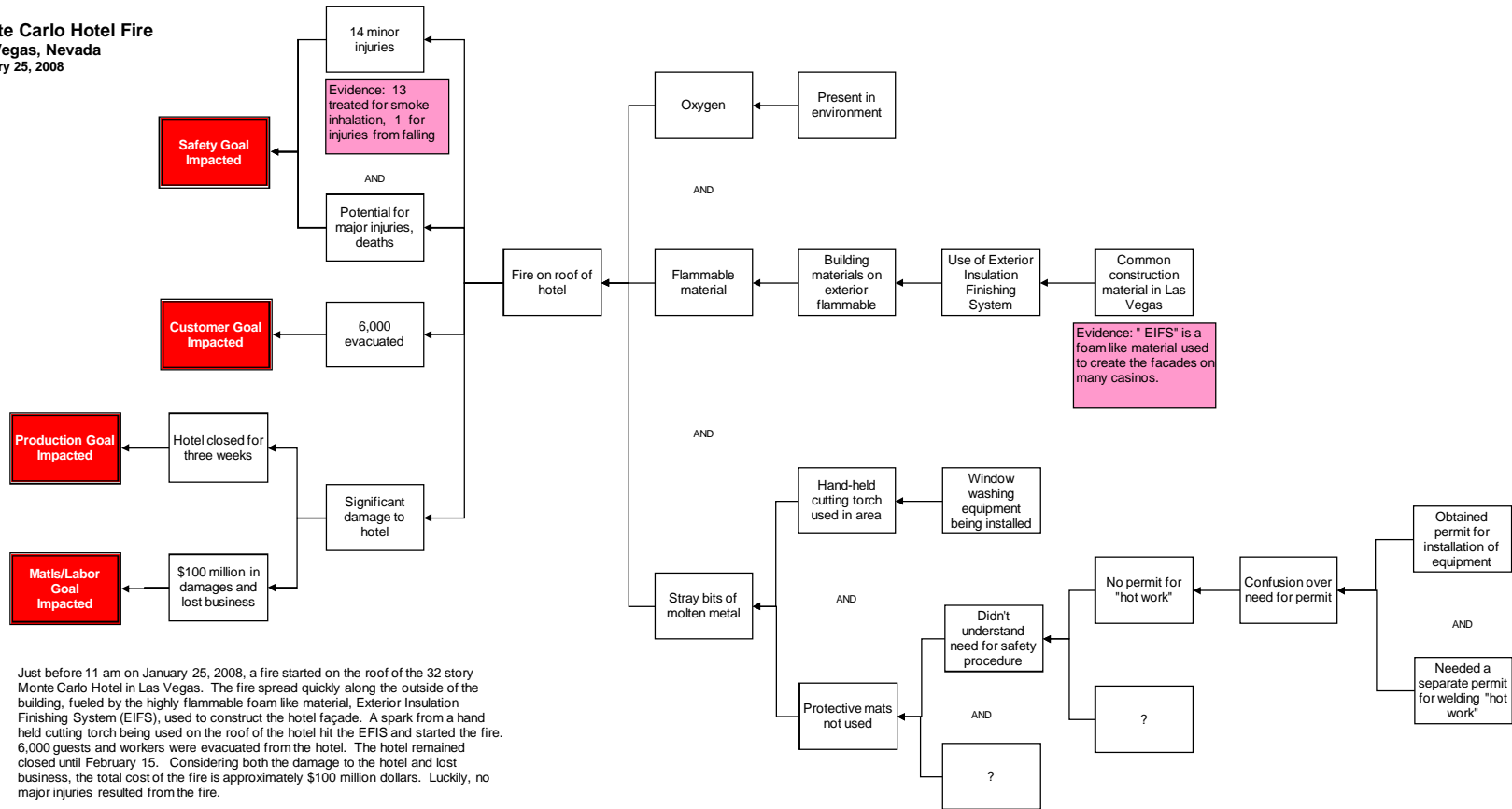


Monte Carlo Hotel Fire
Las Vegas, Nevada
January 25, 2008

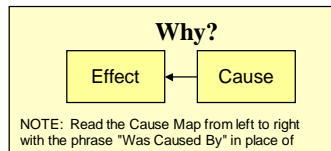


Just before 11 am on January 25, 2008, a fire started on the roof of the 32 story Monte Carlo Hotel in Las Vegas. The fire spread quickly along the outside of the building, fueled by the highly flammable foam like material, Exterior Insulation Finishing System (EIFS), used to construct the hotel façade. A spark from a hand held cutting torch being used on the roof of the hotel hit the EIFS and started the fire. 6,000 guests and workers were evacuated from the hotel. The hotel remained closed until February 15. Considering both the damage to the hotel and lost business, the total cost of the fire is approximately \$100 million dollars. Luckily, no major injuries resulted from the fire.

Cause Map
Detail Level



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A thorough root cause analysis built as a Cause Map can capture all of the causes in a simple, intuitive format that fits on one page. The Cause Map shows that the fire started because a spark from a hand held torch hit a flammable material. The Cause Map can also be used to identify possible solutions that would prevent another fire. In this case, two areas that would merit farther investigation would be the use of highly flammable material on buildings and the lack of protective measures taken to protect the EIFS from the sparks. For example, there were no mats in place to protect the EIFS from being hit by sparks. From the information available, it isn't clear why no protective measures were taken to protect the EIFS, but it is known that the contractor failed to obtain the correct permit (which involves getting information on appropriate safety procedures). It is reported in an Associated Press article on the fire that Las Vegas city officials are currently evaluating whether restrictions should be placed on the use of EIFS.

This is an intermediate level root cause analysis of the hotel fire. It was built using the facts that were available in media reports on the fire. As more details are known, the Cause Map can be expanded.