



National  
Operational  
Guidance

# Survival guidance

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## 1 Introduction

2 During a fire, people at risk may be trapped and unable to reach a place of safety due to:

- 3 • Their ability
- 4 • The location and behaviour of the fire
- 5 • Physical limitations of the environment
- 6 • Physical entrapment

7 There may also be situations where people at risk have the ability to reach a place of safety,  
8 however the actions they take and their reasons for doing this may prevent them from doing so. For  
9 example:

- 10 • Religion
- 11 • Cultural or social beliefs

12 During these situations, the provision of fire survival guidance (FSG) may be necessary to improve  
13 their chances of survival. FSG is defined as the advice and guidance given by fire control personnel to  
14 people at risk, who are directly affected by flames, heat or smoke and cannot get to a place of  
15 safety.

16 All possible means of safe evacuation should be explored prior to the decision being made to give  
17 FSG.

18 FSG will follow the three principles of emergency call handling to:

- 19 • Assess
- 20 • Protect
- 21 • Assist rescue

22 The provision of FSG is not a linear process and fire control personnel will need to use their  
23 professional judgement to continually reassess which of the 3 principles is relevant throughout the  
24 call.

25 This guidance covers the provision of a single FSG call within specific environments. However, the  
26 principle of FSG can be applied to other fire situations, as well as being provided to multiple callers.

27 FSG may need to be passed on by someone else; for example, if a translation or text relay service is  
28 being used, or if the caller is relaying information to others. This will not change the advice being  
29 given; however, fire control personnel may need to tailor their call handling techniques.

30 During FSG calls where people at risk are trapped and unable to reach a place of safety or follow  
31 advice due to their ability, religion, cultural or social beliefs, fire control personnel should identify  
32 the reasons why, what their abilities and limitations are and explore alternative options with the  
33 caller to protect them and improve their chances of survival.

34

35 This guidance document should be read in conjunction with:

- 36 • Emergency call management people at risk, which will provide guidance on evacuation,  
37 effective communication techniques and joint situational awareness

38 The guidance documents below provide additional information which fire control personnel may  
39 find useful:

- 40 • [Fires and firefighting](#), which will provide additional details on fire behaviour and  
41 development
- 42 • [Fires in buildings](#), which will provide additional details on fire spread and buildings that fail
- 43 • [Unstable or collapsed structures](#), which will provide additional details on signs and  
44 symptoms of a failing building
- 45 • [Wildfires](#), which will provide additional details on the hazards and risks associated with  
46 wildfires
- 47 • [Performing rescues](#), which will provide additional details on how operational personnel use  
48 information received from fire control rooms to develop their search plan

#### 49 **Hazard: Calls from or about people at risk: Trapped in a building fire**

##### 50 *HAZARD KNOWLEDGE*

51 If a person is at risk due to immediate danger from flames, heat or smoke, there is a risk of serious  
52 injury or death.

53 It is likely that operational personnel will be required to rescue people at risk. Although the personal  
54 protective equipment (PPE) and safe systems of work reduce the likelihood of harm, there is still a  
55 risk to operational personnel in the building.

56 To accurately provide FSG, it is important that fire control personnel have a basic level of  
57 understanding of fire behaviour and the effects of fire.

##### 58 **Fire behaviour and effects of fire**

59 **Flames** - Flames will generally identify where the fire is most intense and will tend to be confined to  
60 some extent in the room of origin by the walls, floor, ceiling and doors if they are closed. Flames  
61 within vertical shafts, such as stairwells, will rapidly spread upwards.

62 **Heat** – Fires release enormous amounts of heat energy. The extremely hot air and gases produced  
63 are very buoyant and will tend to collect initially at ceiling level in a steadily deepening layer.

64 **Smoke** – Smoke can be produced at a very rapid rate and can fill entire buildings within minutes. As  
65 well as causing breathing difficulties, smoke will severely impair visibility resulting in disorientation,  
66 even in familiar surroundings.

67 Smoke may have severe toxic effects, resulting in irrational behaviour, nausea, and fatigue.

68 Inhalation of hot gases and smoke may cause severe damage to the internal tissues of the throat and  
69 lungs and may even cause unconsciousness or death.

70 Encouraging occupants to move to a place of safety is always the first course of action, however  
71 where this is not possible then FSG may be given. However, as the situation changes or escalates, it  
72 is possible that it may not be safe for people at risk to remain in the location or building and receive  
73 FSG. This could be determined by information received from the incident ground or by fire control

74 personnel.

75 To enable fire control personnel to determine when immediate evacuation is required, even during  
76 unsafe or arduous conditions, they should have a basic understanding of the signs and symptoms of  
77 the following:

- 78 • Potential flashover
- 79 • Potential backdraught
- 80 • Fire gas ignition
- 81 • Firespread
- 82 • Failure of building safety systems
- 83 • Building collapse

84 The less time people at risk are exposed to flames, heat and smoke, the greater the chances of  
85 survival. The length of time people at risk are exposed to the effects of fire may depend on:

- 86 • The advice given by fire control personnel
- 87 • Location of nearest appliances
- 88 • Access and egress for operational personnel
- 89 • Operational personnel being able to locate people at risk
- 90 • Location of people at risk in relation to the fire
- 91 • How effectively the building contains flames, heat or smoke
- 92 • Ventilation within the building including:
  - 93 ○ Natural ventilation, such as open windows
  - 94 ○ Ventilation, such as heating, ventilation and cooling (HVAC) systems and smoke and heat  
95 exhaust ventilation (SHEV) systems

## 96 **Control measure – Situational awareness: Fire survival guidance – building fire**

### 97 *CONTROL MEASURE KNOWLEDGE*

98 Situational awareness will support fire control personnel to identify the hazards and risks associated  
99 with the incident. This will enable them to share risk-critical information with operational personnel  
100 and other responding agencies, provide appropriate fire survival guidance (FSG), and react  
101 dynamically if the incident or the situation of the people at risk changes.

102 Situational awareness can be gathered from:

- 103 • Questioning callers
- 104 • Occupant and premises risk information for example Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI)
- 105 • Risk information shared by other agencies
- 106 • Situational updates from operational personnel and other responding agencies
- 107 • Visual footage or images

108 Known risk information may not be accurate, therefore appropriate assessment and questioning  
109 should be carried out to determine if identified hazards and risks still apply, and if there are any  
110 additional factors to consider.

111 There are several factors which may affect the advice given to callers by fire control personnel, as  
112 well as the ability for operational personnel to rescue people at risk. These include:

- 113 • The immediate threat to people at risk, for example:
  - 114 ○ The location of the fire in relation to their location
  - 115 ○ The effects of the fire they are being exposed to, for example flames, heat or smoke
  - 116 ○ The severity of the effects of fire they are being exposed to
- 117 • The condition, number and ability of people at risk, for example:
  - 118 ○ Existing illness, condition or physical injury preventing them from leaving safely
  - 119 ○ Disorientation or unconsciousness
  - 120 ○ Being non-ambulant
- 121 • The condition and structure of the building, for example:
  - 122 ○ The type of building
  - 123 ○ Hoarding or fire loading in the building
  - 124 ○ Effects of the fire compromising the structure of the building
  - 125 ○ Location of windows and doors
  - 126 ○ Layout of the building
- 127 • The location of the nearest resources

128 To ensure there is joint understanding of risk, relevant information gathered should be shared with  
129 operational personnel and other responding agencies.

130 Due to the dynamically changing situation, and potential escalation of the fire, it is vital that  
131 information gathered is continually reviewed for accuracy.

132 A change in situation may affect the ability of operational personnel to rescue people at risk or mean  
133 that people at risk are in imminent danger. In these circumstances people at risk may be required to  
134 evacuate immediately. This could be due to:

- 135 • Firespread and smoke travel
- 136 • Potential flashover or backdraught
- 137 • Signs and symptoms of fire gas ignition
- 138 • Signs and symptoms of building failure
- 139 • Physical condition of people at risk

140 Any change in advice being given to the caller or the fire situation should be communicated to  
141 operational personnel and responding agencies immediately.

142 If possible, a method of contact should be maintained with the caller until people at risk have  
143 reached a place of safety or are in the care of operational personnel. This contact will ensure that  
144 FSG can continue to be given, regular re-evaluation of the incident and the caller's situation  
145 continues throughout, and that any change of advice can be passed on to people at risk. If a call is  
146 disconnected fire control personnel should attempt to re-contact the caller where necessary. The  
147 recontacting of callers should not put the caller at any additional risk. If contact is unable to be  
148 maintained, consider informing operational personnel.

#### 149 *STRATEGIC ACTIONS*

150 Fire and rescue services should:

- 151 • Ensure up-to-date risk information can be accessed by fire control personnel
- 152 • Consider making risk information available to fire control personnel on the mobilising  
153 system
- 154 • Ensure inaccuracies in risk information are resolved and systems updated post incident
- 155 • Consider the use of system based call prompts or aide memoirs to assist fire control  
156 personnel in gaining situational awareness
- 157 • Consider the use of electronic systems to share information between the fire control room  
158 and the incident ground to improve joint situational awareness
- 159 • Consider the use of electronic systems to share information between the fire control room  
160 and other responding agencies to improve joint situational awareness

#### 161 *TACTICAL ACTIONS*

162 Fire control personnel should:

- 163 • Use professional judgement, call handling techniques and available risk information to  
164 gather sufficient situational awareness to allow the provision of fire survival guidance
- 165 • Use situational awareness to assist operational personnel and other responding agencies
- 166 • Identify the immediate threat to people at risk from flames, heat or smoke in a building
- 167 • Establish the condition, number and ability of the people who are at risk from flames, heat  
168 or smoke in a building
- 169 • Gather information on the condition and structure of the building
- 170 • Identify the location of people at risk and their location in relation to the fire
- 171 • If possible, maintain contact with the caller until people at risk have reached a place of  
172 safety or are in the care of operational personnel
- 173 • If required, establish a method of recontacting the caller to allow contact to be maintained  
174 until people at risk have reached a place of safety or are in the care of operational personnel
- 175 • Continually reassess the situation and recognise the signs of potential incident escalation,  
176 including fire development and signs and symptoms of a failing building, and amend fire  
177 survival guidance as required

- 178 • Consider instructing people at risk to immediately evacuate the building, if it is recognised  
179 that they are in immediate danger
- 180 • Use information received from operational personnel and other responding agencies to  
181 inform situational awareness and amend fire survival guidance as required
- 182 • Immediately inform operational personnel and other responding agencies about a change in  
183 fire situation which results in an amendment to the advice given to callers
- 184 • Continually exchange all relevant information between the fire control room and operational  
185 personnel
- 186 • Share all relevant information with other responding agencies

187 **Control measure– Protect people at risk: fire survival guidance – building fire**

188 **CONTROL MEASURE KNOWLEDGE**

189 To protect people at risk from a fire in a building, the advice given should be based on control room  
190 personnel’s basic knowledge and understanding of fire behaviour and development.

191 **Gather together**

192 If there are several people at risk in a building, it may be advantageous for them to gather in one  
193 location because:

- 194 • Fire survival guidance (FSG) can be passed from fire control personnel to a single person,  
195 who can consistently relay the advice to others
- 196 • It may reduce the likelihood of multiple FSG calls being received by the fire control room  
197 from a single location
- 198 • It supports easier and quicker rescue of multiple people from a single location

199 This guidance may not be appropriate for large, complex, tall or buildings of multiple occupancy. For  
200 example, in tall buildings it may not be safe for people to move between floors or flats. People at risk  
201 should not move into one room or location if doing so exposes them to additional risk. Fire control  
202 personnel should assess whether this is appropriate guidance when gaining situational awareness.

203 **Move away from fire**

204 The risk of injury from flames, heat and smoke should be reduced the further away people are from  
205 the location of the fire.

206 When advising people to move to another room or location, consideration should be given to the  
207 following:

- 208 • Fire gas ignitions can affect rooms adjacent to the fire location.
- 209 • Doors that feel hot to the touch are likely to be affected by the fire and should not be  
210 opened
- 211 • A window can provide both fresh air and a means of leaving the building if the situation  
212 escalates, or if external rescue by operational personnel is required
- 213 • The person at risk may be on a phone that is only available in their current location



214 • If the caller is unable to remain on the phone when moving to another location,  
215 consideration should be given to:

216 ○ Advising the person to redial 999 so that FSG can be continued

217 ○ Providing sufficient FSG before allowing the caller to hang up the phone

### 218 **Close doors**

219 A standard door will usually contain the spread of fire due to the inherent fire resisting properties of  
220 the materials used. Standard doors should also lessen the spread of toxic smoke and fumes into  
221 otherwise unaffected parts of the building for a short amount of time. They also reduce the flow of  
222 air to the fire, reducing fire growth and spread.

223 The more closed doors between people at risk and the fire, the safer they will be and the more the  
224 spread of the fire will be reduced.

### 225 **Block doors**

226 Although closing doors will slow the spread of smoke, considerable quantities can still pass around  
227 the door edges and through other gaps in the room, such as air vents. Cloth can absorb some of the  
228 smoke particles and filter some of the gases contained in the smoke. Placing cloth objects, such as  
229 bedding, pillows, clothing or towels, around gaps where smoke is entering, will reduce the amount  
230 of smoke entering the room.

### 231 **Cover mouth and nose**

232 Placing cloth objects over the mouth and nose can reduce the inhalation of smoke and gases.

### 233 **Stay low**

234 Near the fire, the smoke will be hot and buoyant, collecting with the hot gases at higher levels.  
235 Further from the fire, as the smoke cools it will mix with the general air and be more evenly  
236 distributed at high and low levels.

237 Remaining close to the floor, as low as possible, should reduce the amount of smoke and hot gases  
238 people are exposed to.

### 239 **Open window**

240 An open window will allow smoke to leave the room and fresh air to enter; the air underneath the  
241 window will also be cooler.

242 When fire control personnel advise people at risk to open a window, consideration should be given  
243 to the location of the fire. Opening a window may increase the risk due to:

244 • Firespread on the external walls of the building

245 • Fire being located beneath the window, allowing smoke from outside to enter the room  
246 through the window

247 • The air entering the room may encourage fire development

248 It is important to reassess the conditions after a window has been opened, if there are any signs or  
249 symptoms which suggest an increased risk or escalation of the incident, for example:

250 • Signs and symptoms of backdraught

251 • Smoke entering through the window

252 • Flames visible behind the door

253 • Flames visible outside the window

254 In these scenarios, the situation should be assessed as to whether the window should be closed or  
255 people at risk told to evacuate.

256 If the window cannot be opened, a firm blow aimed at the corner of the pane with a hard, sharp  
257 object will help the glass to break. Glass left at the edges should be knocked out and sharp edges  
258 should be covered if possible, to prevent injury. Careful consideration should be given when advising  
259 people at risk to break a window, as once the glass is broken it cannot be undone.

260 It is important that fire control personnel confirm with the caller that people at risk have taken  
261 action and followed the advice given.

262 The advice given may affect the tactical actions of operational personnel, for example, an open  
263 window can act as a source of natural ventilation of the building. If operational personnel then use  
264 tactical ventilation methods, it may push the heat and smoke towards people at risk. Informing  
265 operational personnel of the advice given and actions taken will allow an effective tactical plan to be  
266 produced.

267 Situational awareness gained throughout the call should continually be reassessed for accuracy to  
268 ensure advice being given is relevant and up to date.

#### 269 *STRATEGIC ACTIONS*

270 Fire and rescue services should:

271 • Consider the use of system based call prompts or aide memoirs to assist fire control  
272 personnel in providing advice to protect people at risk

273 • Consider the use of electronic systems to share information between the control room and  
274 the incident ground about the advice and guidance that is being given

#### 275 *TACTICAL ACTIONS*

276 Fire control personnel should:

277 • Provide suitable fire survival guidance to protect people based on their professional  
278 judgement

279 • Provide suitable fire survival guidance to protect people based on their knowledge of fire  
280 behaviour and the effects of fire

281 • Consider encouraging people to gather together in one location if it is safe to do so

282 • Consider encouraging people to move to another location further away from the fire if it is  
283 safe to do so

284 • Consider encouraging people to move to a room where there is a window or an alternative  
285 means of escape if it is safe to do so

- 286 • Consider telling people not to remain in a room immediately above or next to the location of  
287 the fire
- 288 • Consider telling people to use the back of the hand to feel the heat of doors prior to opening  
289 them if it is safe to do so
- 290 • Consider telling people to close all doors possible between people at risk and the fire if it is  
291 safe to do so
- 292 • Consider encouraging people to use cloth objects to cover any gaps around doorways or air  
293 vents if it is safe to do so
- 294 • Consider encouraging people to use cloth objects to cover the nose and mouth
- 295 • Consider telling people to open the window, using methods of breaking the glass where the  
296 window is locked, but being careful to remember that this cannot then be closed again
- 297 • Reassess the conditions after opening a window, and change advice where necessary
- 298 • Encourage people to remain low to the ground underneath the open window
- 299 • Confirm that people at risk have followed each piece of advice
- 300 • Continually exchange all relevant information between the fire control room and operational  
301 personnel detailing the actions taken and advice given to people at risk
- 302 • Continually reassess situational awareness to ensure advice given to protect people at risk is  
303 relevant and up to date

304 **Control measure– Assist rescue of people at risk: Fire survival guidance – building fire**

305 *CONTROL MEASURE KNOWLEDGE*

306 People who are directly affected by fire and unable to safely evacuate from a building, will need to  
307 be rescued by operational personnel. Operational personnel often use four phases in every search  
308 and rescue scenario as detailed in performing rescues, these are:

- 309 • Locate
- 310 • Access
- 311 • Stabilise both the situation and any casualties
- 312 • Transport - to a place of safety and definitive care

313 Fire control personnel can assist operational personnel with all stages of search and rescue.  
314 Throughout the call, fire control personnel should continually share all relevant information with  
315 operational personnel and other responding agencies, both prior to and when they are in  
316 attendance. This should include information about the incident, as well as the people at risk, to  
317 support a joint understanding of risk and to inform accurate situational awareness.

318 Fire control personnel share information to assist with the rescue of people aiming to reduce the  
319 amount of time people and operational personnel are in the hazard area, reducing the risk of harm.  
320 This information may lead to operational personnel requesting additional resources; however, this  
321 does not remove the discretion and professional judgement of dynamic mobilising applied by fire  
322 control personnel. The following information should be gathered by fire control personnel. This  
323 information should be used to aid dynamic mobilising decisions and be shared with operational

324 personnel and other responding agencies where appropriate:

325 • Location of all people at risk, for example:

326 ○ Flat or room number for buildings of multiple occupancy

327 ○ Floor number Kitchen or first floor bedroom

328 • A visual description of where the location is, for example:

329 ○ Front left window when looking from the road at the front of the building

330 ○ First room on the right at the top of the stairs

331 • Age and number of people at risk

332 • Condition and mobility of people

333 • Access and egress information for the building including any issues, for example:

334 ○ Access codes for the building

335 ○ If the window is at the rear of the building

336 ○ If there is a gate to gain access

337 • Location of the fire and fire conditions people at risk are experiencing

338 • Description of the smoke including:

339 ○ How much smoke is in the room, for example, can they see across the room or can  
340 they see their hand at arm's length

341 ○ Colour of smoke

342 ○ Where the smoke is coming from

343 • Condition of the building, including any known risks such as hoarding

344 For large or complex buildings, consider the use of location services to identify the exact location of  
345 people within the building.

346 Depending on the situation the following advice to people at risk may prove useful in assisting the  
347 rescue:

348 • Remain near to the window or against a wall

349 • Use a visual aid, a torch or mobile phone light to identify the room you are in

350 • Do not hide underneath any furniture or lock yourself in a room

351 • If it is safe to do so, on arrival of operational personnel stand at the window and make  
352 yourself known by making noise, using visual aids or waving to them

353 • On arrival of operational personnel, remain in your current location unless advised  
354 otherwise

355 This list is not exhaustive and the reasons why people were unable to evacuate should be considered  
356 as this may affect access and egress for operational personnel.

357 Situational awareness gained throughout the call should continually be reassessed for accuracy to  
358 ensure advice being given is relevant and up to date.

359 **STRATEGIC ACTIONS**

360 **Fire and rescue services should:**

- 361 • Consider the use of system based call prompts or aide memoirs to assist fire control  
362 personnel providing advice to assist the rescue of people at risk
- 363 • Consider the use of electronic systems to share information between the fire control room  
364 and the incident ground to assist in the rescue of people at risk
- 365 • Consider the use of electronic systems to share information between the fire control room  
366 and other responding agencies to improve joint situational awareness

367 **TACTICAL ACTIONS**

368 **Fire control personnel should:**

- 369 • Share information about the location of people at risk, including a visual description of the  
370 location if available, to operational personnel and other responding agencies where  
371 appropriate
- 372 • Share information about the number of people at risk, as well as their condition and ability  
373 to operational personnel and other responding agencies where appropriate
- 374 • Share information about access and egress with operational personnel and other  
375 responding agencies where appropriate
- 376 • Share information about the location of the fire and conditions in the building with  
377 operational personnel and other responding agencies where appropriate
- 378 • Use the information gathered to consider dynamic mobilising including multi agency  
379 resources to assist the rescue of people at risk
- 380 • Consider advising people at risk to remain near to the window or against a wall if safe to do  
381 so
- 382 • Advise people at risk to use a visual aid, a torch or mobile phone light to identify the room  
383 they are in
- 384 • Advise people at risk not to hide or lock themselves in a room
- 385 • Advise people at risk to alert operational personnel to their location by making noise or  
386 using visual aids when they arrive
- 387 • Advise people at risk that on arrival of operational personnel they are to remain in their  
388 current location unless advised otherwise
- 389 • Share all relevant information to assist rescue of people at risk with other responding  
390 agencies
- 391 • Continually reassess situational awareness to ensure the information gathered and advice  
392 given is relevant and up to date to assist the rescue of people at risk

393 **Hazard – Calls from or about people at risk affected by wildfire**

394 This Hazard should be read in conjunction with:

- 395 • Hazard - Calls from or about people at risk trapped

396 • Hazard – Calls from or about people at risk trapped in or by fire

397 *HAZARD KNOWLEDGE*

398 Wildfires are unplanned fires that burn in natural areas like forests or grasslands. These dangerous  
399 fires spread quickly and can devastate not only natural areas, but also communities.

400 Emergency alerts and notifications will provide information and instructions to people at risk who  
401 are in the vicinity of a wildfire. Preprepared evacuation plans will support people in leaving the area  
402 early where possible as this will be the safest option.

403 The [Wildfire](#) guidance document provides additional information which people may find useful.

404 **Effects of wildfire**

405 **Ember attack** – Embers are burning twigs, leaves and pieces of debris. They are carried by the wind  
406 and land ahead or away from the main fire and can start spot fires. Buildings may be damaged or  
407 destroyed by ember attack when thousands of embers fly through the air ahead of the main fire  
408 front and start fires in gutters and around the building. Embers can cause fires many kilometres in  
409 front of the main fire and can start falling up to an hour before the fire arrives.

410 **Direct flame contact** - This happens when trees, shrubs and grass close to a building catch fire and  
411 flames reach the outside of a building

412 **Radiant heat** – Radiant heat is many times hotter than the air temperature and the front of a moving  
413 fire radiates up to six times more heat than its back. It's unlikely radiant heat will cause a building to  
414 catch fire, but it can cause surfaces to catch alight, shatter glass and allow sparks, embers and flames  
415 to get into a building. Radiant heat only radiates in straight lines and can be blocked by a solid object  
416 such as a concrete wall or building. The best protection from radiant heat is distance.

417 **Wind** – Strong winds are normally present during wildfires; the wind pushes flames closer to  
418 unburnt fuel and causes the fire to travel faster. Wind also dries out vegetation, making it more  
419 flammable, and bends flames over allowing radiant heat to pre-heat unburnt fuel. The higher the  
420 wind speed, the greater the fire danger. Wind has a significant influence on:

- 421 • The speed at which a fire spreads
- 422 • The direction in which a fire travels and the size of the fire front
- 423 • The intensity of a fire by providing more oxygen
- 424 • The likelihood of spot fires caused by embers

425 A change in wind direction is one of the strongest influences of how the wildfire behaves due to the  
426 unpredictable impact this may have on the direction of the fire spread. Strong gusty winds, intense  
427 heat and flames will cause operational personnel and people at risk to become tired quickly.

428 The potential size, noise and unpredictable nature of a wildfire can be a terrifying situation. There  
429 may be occasions where people at risk do not have time to evacuate the area and they will seek  
430 shelter within a building or in a vehicle until the fire has safely passed by.

431 Guidance given to people sheltering from a wildfire is different to fire survival guidance for people at

432 risk who are trapped, however if a building or vehicle they are seeking shelter in catches fire then  
433 the appropriate fire survival guidance for the environment they are trapped in should be provided.

434 Due to the complexities of fighting wildfires, it should be recognised that operational personnel may  
435 face extreme difficulty in rescuing or locating people who are sheltering. This may be due to:

- 436 • Size and intensity of the fire
- 437 • Heat from the fire
- 438 • Difficulty in accessing the location of people due to hazards within the terrain
- 439 • Difficulty in locating people due to the location, for example wildfires often occur over vast  
440 rural areas

441 If any buildings are affected by wildfire this may cause power and water supplies to be cut off  
442 resulting in a feeling of isolation for people at risk inside a building. It may also be dark, noisy and  
443 extremely demanding both mentally and physically.

444 Travelling in a vehicle during a wildfire is very dangerous. Vision may be impaired by smoke, and  
445 there may be obstacles on the road such as fallen trees. There is a much higher risk of an accident  
446 during a wildfire therefore escape via a vehicle may not be recommended depending upon the  
447 conditions.

#### 448 **Control measure - Situational awareness: Fire survival guidance - Wildfire**

449 This control measure should be read in conjunction with:

- 450 • Control measure – Situational awareness: Survival guidance
- 451 • Control measure – Situational awareness: Fire survival guidance

#### 452 *CONTROL MEASURE KNOWLEDGE*

453 There are several factors which may affect the advice given to callers by fire control personnel, as  
454 well as the ability for operational personnel to rescue people at risk. These include:

- 455 • Whether people at risk are evacuating the area or seeking shelter
- 456 • The environment they are seeking shelter in
- 457 • The immediate threat to people at risk, for example:
  - 458 ○ The direction that the fire is travelling in
  - 459 ○ The location of the fire in relation to the callers location
  - 460 ○ The effects of the fire they are being exposed to, for example flames, smoke or heat

461 Situational updates from operational personnel should include information about the direction that  
462 the wildfire is travelling. This will enable fire control personnel to identify whether people at risk are  
463 seeking shelter in the direction of fire travel and give appropriate guidance and advice as required.

464 There may be occasions where the environment that people at risk are seeking shelter in is on fire.  
465 An assessment of whether it is safe for them to evacuate will determine the advice and guidance

466 given by fire control personnel.

467 Information gathered from agencies that provide weather information will support operational  
468 personnel in preparing their tactical plans based on the situation they are currently facing as well as  
469 predicted forecasts. For example wind direction, wind speed or rainfall.

#### 470 *STRATEGIC ACTIONS*

471 Fire and rescue services should:

- 472 • Ensure processes are in place to update fire control rooms of information from strategic and  
473 tactical co-ordinating groups regarding wildfire behaviour and prediction, fire spread and  
474 weather predictions

#### 475 *TACTICAL ACTIONS*

476 Fire control personnel should:

- 477 • Identify the immediate threat to people at risk from wildfire
- 478 • Identify whether people at risk are evacuating the area or seeking shelter
- 479 • Identify the location of people at risk and their location in relation to the wildfire
- 480 • Identify the environment people at risk are seeking shelter in
- 481 • Establish the condition of the environment they are seeking shelter in, for example whether  
482 it is on fire
- 483 • Continually reassess the situation and recognise the signs of potential incident escalation  
484 and if the wildfire has not safely passed
- 485 • Consider using weather warnings and accessing systems that provide weather information  
486 and forecasts to build situational awareness

#### 487 **Control measure - Protect people at risk: fire survival guidance - wildfire**

488 This control measure should be read in conjunction with:

- 489 • Control measure – Protect people at risk: Survival guidance
- 490 • Control measure – Protect people at risk: Fire survival guidance

#### 491 *CONTROL MEASURE KNOWLEDGE*

492 The advice and guidance given to people at risk trapped by a wildfire will depend on the situation  
493 they are in and whether they have time to plan for an evacuation. Guidance for people at risk will  
494 include:

- 495 • Evacuating the area early
- 496 • Seeking shelter in a building
- 497 • Seeking shelter in a car



- 498 • Seeking shelter on foot
- 499 • Evacuating from a place of shelter

500 **Evacuating the area early**

501 Fire control personnel may receive calls from people at risk seeking advice about a wildfire that is  
502 developing in their area. Early evacuation will always be the safest option in this circumstance.

503 When preparing to evacuate, people at risk should consider how they are going to evacuate, their  
504 evacuation route and where they are evacuating to. A co-ordinated multi agency approach to  
505 evacuating people at risk may be implemented.

506 Local authority guidance and instructions may be given if people need to evacuate to a public  
507 shelter. The internet, social media and local news stations may broadcast local authority warnings  
508 and instructions.

509 People at risk should consider taking items with them which will help them during their evacuation.  
510 These items include:

- 511 • Waterproof torch with spare batteries
- 512 • Appropriate clothing such as a wide brimmed hat, eye protection, sturdy leather boots or  
513 shoes, long trousers, long sleeved top and gloves
- 514 • First aid kit with manual
- 515 • Candles with waterproof matches
- 516 • Blankets
- 517 • Emergency contact numbers
- 518 • Cash, ATM or credit cards
- 519 • Medications, toiletries and sanitary supplies
- 520 • Special requirements for infants or the elderly and people who are injured or disabled
- 521 • Mobile phone and charger
- 522 • Combination pocket knife
- 523 • Change of clothes for everyone
- 524 • Food
- 525 • Drinking water

526 Companion animals should also be considered and should wear an identification tag. Items such as a  
527 leash, basket, pet medication, food and a familiar toy should be taken.

528  
529 **Sheltering in a building**

530 People at risk of a wildfire may seek shelter in a building rather than evacuating the area. This could  
531 be through choice, or because they do not have time to evacuate the area safely. A structure should  
532 offer more protection than a car so people at risk should try to seek shelter in a home, outbuilding or  
533 building.

534 The guidance given to people sheltering in a building will be to protect them from the wildfire that is

535 passing by. If the building they are sheltering in catches fire they should try to leave and go outside  
536 to ground that has already been burnt or ground with little vegetation or fire loading if possible.

537 If they are unable to leave and are trapped inside, then fire survival guidance for people at risk  
538 trapped in a building fire should be given.

539 People at risk may speak to fire control personnel in anticipation of the wildfire reaching them.  
540 Proactive advice and guidance can be given to support them in preparing the building for the arrival  
541 of the wildfire but consideration should be given to ask the people at risk to call back if and when  
542 the fire arrives.

#### 543 **Store water**

544 Sinks, bath tubs and buckets should be filled with cold water in case the water supply is cut off. This  
545 can be used to put out small fires that may start in or around the home caused by embers. The water  
546 can also be used to drink and flush toilets.

#### 547 **Prepare extinguishing products**

548 Sprinklers and hoses should be placed strategically around the building and turned on to wet the  
549 shelter and surroundings when the fire is approaching. People should not access the roof to hose  
550 down the building.

551 Fire extinguishers should be out and ready to use.

#### 552 **Move furniture**

553 Any outdoor furniture or flammable materials should be moved away from the building. This  
554 includes vehicles, recreational equipment, outdoor seating and firewood. This will reduce the  
555 potential of fire spread to the building.

556 Indoor furniture should be moved away from windows or glass doors as radiant heat may cause  
557 these items to ignite.

#### 558 **Open gates**

559 Gates should be opened to prevent flames from spreading from a fence to a building. When the fire  
560 arrives and passes by the building, the noise will be fierce and there will be an increase in  
561 temperature. People at risk should resist the urge to flee and continue to stay inside and seek  
562 shelter as per the advice given by fire control personnel.

563 Although it will be extremely hot inside the building, it can be four or five times hotter outside. If the  
564 building catches fire, guidance and advice should be given as per the hazard 'calls from or about  
565 people at risk trapped in a building fire'. If the whole of the building is in the path of the wildfire, the  
566 room people at risk gather in should be in the centre of the building and they should stay away from  
567 windows and glass doors.

568 If the wildfire is approaching one side of the building, people at risk should shelter in a room on the  
569 opposite side.

570 Where possible a room with a clear access to an exit should also be considered.

#### 571 **Seeking shelter in a vehicle**

572 People at risk may be travelling on foot or in a vehicle when they become affected by a wildfire. If a  
573 building is not available to seek shelter in then a vehicle can be used as a last option. This will be  
574 safer than being in the open where people will be directly exposed to flames and radiant heat.

575 Vehicles should be parked off the road behind a solid structure to block as much heat as possible. If a  
576 solid structure is not available, park in a clear area away from trees, scrub and tall grass as this is the  
577 fuel for the wildfire.

578 The front of the vehicle should face towards the fire if the location of the fire is known, the engine  
579 should be turned off and hazard lights and headlights should be put on. This will make the car more  
580 visible in heavy smoke and reduce the risk of a road traffic collision with other vehicles that may be  
581 in the area.

582 Windows, doors and air vents should all be closed as this will help to stop smoke entering the  
583 vehicle.

584 People should cover themselves with blankets or coats and get low as possible in the car. Lying in  
585 the footwell or in a space below the windows will protect them from radiant heat.

586 Placing cloth objects over the mouth and nose can reduce the inhalation of smoke and gases.

587 People should stay down low and inside the vehicle until the sound of the fire has passed and the  
588 outside temperature drops. Once they are confident that the fire has passed, they should be able to  
589 leave the car, taking care as the vehicle may be hot. Once the vehicle has been exited safely, people  
590 should make their way to ground that has already been burnt or ground with little vegetation or fire  
591 loading if possible.

592 People should not attempt to drive the vehicle due to potential damage caused by the wildfire such  
593 as melted brake, hoses and fuel tanks.

#### 594 **Seeking shelter in the open**

595 There may be occasions where people are caught outside when a wildfire approaches and they are  
596 unable to seek shelter in a building or vehicle.

597 Exposed skin should be covered up with natural fabrics as these are less flammable than synthetic  
598 fabrics.

599 People should try and hide behind a solid object to block the radiant heat but stay away from glass if  
600 any is present in the solid object.

601 If people are unable to hide behind a solid object then an area clear of vegetation or a ditch should  
602 be found that is on level ground if possible. People should lie face down and cover up their body.

#### 603 *STRATEGIC ACTIONS*

604 Fire and rescue services should:

- 605 • Ensure arrangements are in place with local authorities to share information with fire  
606 control rooms regarding evacuation

607 *TACTICAL ACTIONS*

608 Fire control personnel should:

- 609 • Give appropriate guidance to people who are planning to evacuate the area
- 610 • Give appropriate guidance to people who are seeking shelter in a building
- 611 • Give appropriate guidance to people who are seeking shelter in a vehicle
- 612 • Give appropriate guidance to people who are seeking shelter in the open
- 613 • Advise people to stay on to ground that has already been burnt or ground with little
- 614 vegetation or fire loading when moving in the open

615 **Control measure – Welfare and safety check of people at risk: fire survival guidance -**  
616 **wildfire**

617 This control measure should be read in conjunction with:

- 618 • Control measure – Assist rescue: Survival guidance
- 619 • Control measure – Assist rescue: Fire survival guidance

620 *CONTROL MEASURE KNOWLEDGE*

621 People at risk who are sheltering may not need rescuing and should be safe once the fire has passed.  
622 Operational personnel may still attend the location of people who were sheltering to check on their  
623 welfare and assess for any damage caused by flames, heat or smoke.

624 Rescue may only be required if the person at risk becomes unwell or unconscious as a result of the  
625 passing fire, or if the environment they are sheltering in is on fire and they are unable to evacuate.  
626 Guidance to assist rescue of people at risk in the specific environment should be referred to, for  
627 example assist rescue of people at risk: Fire survival guidance – building.

628 Regardless of the environment people are seeking shelter in, whether they are trapped or the fire  
629 has passed, fire control personnel should continually share all information with operational  
630 personnel and responding agencies, both prior to and when they are in attendance. This will support  
631 a joint understanding of risk and inform accurate situational awareness.

632 The information provided by fire control personnel allows for evaluation and prioritisation of people  
633 who have sought shelter and may need checking on. Sharing information about people who are  
634 seeking shelter should reduce the amount of time operational personnel spend searching for people  
635 at risk, thereby reducing their risk of harm.

636 The following information should be gathered by fire control personnel and relayed to operational  
637 personnel:

- 638 • Address/exact location of all people, for example:
  - 639 ○ Corner of car park on specific road
- 640 • Environment of people seeking shelter, for example:

- 641                   ○ Building/house
- 642                   ○ Vehicle/car
- 643                   ○ Ditch in the open
- 644                 • Make, model and registration plate of vehicle people are seeking shelter in
- 645                 • Location of the wildfire and fire conditions people at risk are experiencing
- 646                 • If people are safe and the wildfire has passed

647 Depending on the situation the following advice to people at risk may prove useful in assisting the  
648 rescue:

- 649                 • Leave exterior and interior lights on to help operational personnel locate buildings in dense  
650 smoke
- 651                 • Keep doors and windows unlocked
- 652                 • If it is safe to do so, on arrival of operational personnel stand at the window and make  
653 yourself known by making noise, using visual aids or waving to them
- 654                 • If within a car use the horn to make operational personnel aware of your location

655 *TACTICAL ACTIONS*

656 Fire control personnel should:

- 657                 • Share the type of environment that people at risk are sheltering in with operational  
658 personnel and other responding agencies
- 659                 • Share information about the location of the wildfire and conditions people who are  
660 sheltering are experiencing with operational personnel and other responding agencies
- 661                 • Advise people at risk who are sheltering in a building to leave exterior and interior lights on
- 662                 • Advise people at risk who are sheltering in a building to leave windows and doors unlocked
- 663                 • Advise people at risk who are sheltering in a car to use the horn
- 664                 • Inform operational personnel and other responding agencies when people are in a place of  
665 safety

666 **Hazard – Calls from or about people at risk: trapped in or by transport fire**

667 This Hazard should be read in conjunction with:

- 668                 • Hazard - Calls from or about people at risk trapped
- 669                 • Hazard – Calls from or about people at risk trapped in or by fire

670 *HAZARD KNOWLEDGE*

671 There are many modes of transport that people at risk may be trapped by fire on or in. Fire control  
672 rooms may receive these calls directly from members of the public; however it should be recognised  
673 that many of the modes of transport are owned and operated by organisations that have their own  
674 control rooms therefore fire control personnel may not speak directly to the people who are at risk.

675 Examples of operating companies control rooms include:

- 676 • Network Rail
- 677 • Metro/Underground
- 678 • Airports
- 679 • Maritime Coastguard Agency

680 Due to the number of variables for each of the modes of transport, it is not possible to produce a  
681 standard set of survival guidance that will accommodate this therefore fire control personnel may  
682 spend a lot of the call gathering information and providing reassurance to people at risk.

683 **Control measure - Situational awareness: Fire survival guidance – trapped or involved in**  
684 **transport fire**

685 This control measure should be read in conjunction with:

- 686 • Control measure – Situational awareness: Survival guidance
- 687 • Control measure – Situational awareness: Fire survival guidance

688 *CONTROL MEASURE KNOWLEDGE*

689 There are several factors which may affect the advice given by fire control personnel to callers that  
690 are trapped or involved in transport fire. These include:

- 691 • The type of transport involved in the fire, for example:
  - 692 ○ Road vehicle
  - 693 ○ Aircraft
  - 694 ○ Rail system
- 695 • The location of the transport, for example:
  - 696 ○ In a tunnel
  - 697 ○ In a port
- 698 • Age of the transport and what safety measures are installed
- 699 • Size of the transport
- 700 • Number of passengers on board
- 701 • Whether the transport has trained crew on board
- 702 • Whether there is any pre-determined safety and evacuation guidance
- 703 • Any specific advice or instruction given by other operating companies control rooms

704 For incidents involving road vehicles, establishing the make and model of the vehicle will assist  
705 operational personnel in identifying where safety systems such as airbags are located. This will  
706 enable operational personnel to isolate safety systems where required and reduce the risk of harm  
707 from an unexpected airbag actuation.

708 For incidents on a mode of transport that has its own control room, contact should be made at the  
709 earliest opportunity to obtain any specific instructions, advice and guidance that we should share  
710 with passengers that are trapped and operational personnel. This advice and guidance will be  
711 specific to the known variables of the incident, the type of transport involved and the tactical plan  
712 that has been determined by on board staff.

713 A change in situation may mean that people at risk are in imminent danger. In these circumstances  
714 people at risk may be required to evacuate from the mode of transport immediately. This may lead  
715 people at risk into other hazards or risks, for example:

- 716 • Traction current/live tracks
- 717 • Other rail systems passing on the opposite track
- 718 • Open water
- 719 • Motorway or other road network

720 Any change in advice to the caller or fire situation should be communicated to operational personnel  
721 and operating companies control rooms immediately.

#### 722 *STRATEGIC ACTIONS*

723 Fire and rescue services should:

- 724 • Ensure fire control rooms have contact information for operating companies control rooms

#### 725 *TACTICAL ACTIONS*

726 Fire control personnel should:

- 727 • Contact operating companies control rooms as soon as possible to share incident  
728 information and discuss appropriate advice and guidance
- 729 • Consider instructing people at risk to evacuate the mode of transport if it is recognised that  
730 they are in immediate danger
- 731 • Use situational awareness to assist operational personnel and operating company control  
732 rooms
- 733 • Identify the immediate threat to people at risk of fire or smoke in or on a mode of transport
- 734 • Identify factors that may change the advice or guidance given to people at risk
- 735 • Identify the make and model of road vehicles where possible to enable safety systems to be  
736 isolated by operational personnel
- 737 • Continually exchange information between the fire control room, operational personnel and  
738 operating company control rooms

#### 739 **Control measure – Protect people at risk: Fire survival guidance – transport fire**

740 This control measure should be read in conjunction with:

- 741 • Control measure – Protect people at risk: Survival guidance

742           • Control measure – Protect people at risk: Fire survival guidance

743   *CONTROL MEASURE KNOWLEDGE*

744   Calls to people that are trapped in or by transport fire may be received from the person involved or  
745   a third party. The same protect advice should be given to people at risk and to the third party.

746   **Trapped in a road vehicle**

747   People at risk may be trapped in a road vehicle that is on fire, this may be due to

- 748           • A road traffic collision (RTC)
- 749           • A mechanical or electrical failure meaning the doors or windows cannot be opened
- 750           • Mobility issues of passengers within the vehicle

751   If they are not trapped due to their injuries but are unable to leave the vehicle via the door, other  
752   methods of escape may be possible based on the location of the fire.

753   Rear windows in small vehicles may be difficult to use as an exit due to the size of the window as  
754   well as the opening mechanisms. People in the rear of the vehicle may need to exit through the front  
755   windows, head restraints on the front seats may restrict their routes to exit the vehicle. Removing  
756   head restraints will not only remove this restriction but can also be used to break a window if  
757   necessary.

758   The same method of breaking a window contained within FSG – building fire should be used.

759   Some cars may have levers or cables within the boot which can be used to open it enabling people  
760   to escape. Levers and cables may not always be visible and may be hidden underneath panels or  
761   material.

762   Windows at the rear of buses and coaches often have emergency exits and levers can be used to  
763   release the window.

764   If people are trapped due to their injuries, fire control personnel may only be able to offer  
765   reassurance to casualties until the arrival of operational personnel or other agencies.

766   **Trapped on a rail system**

767   Newer passenger rail systems will have safety notices located at entrances and exits indicating what  
768   passengers should do in the event of an emergency. These instructions should be followed.

769   Some rail systems have an emergency intercom system which enables passengers to speak directly  
770   to the driver or the rail system control room. They should be identified by appropriate signage.

771   Passengers should attempt to make contact via the intercom system as soon as a fire is discovered  
772   as this will enable the driver or the control room to initiate their emergency procedures.

773   Passengers should always follow instructions from on board staff, this could be the driver or other  
774   crew members.



775 Passengers should remain on a rail system where possible and evacuation should only be done in a  
776 safe, controlled way led by rail system staff. Unplanned evacuation could lead passengers to other  
777 risks outside of the train and advice should only be given to do this following consultation with the  
778 rail system control room and only if passengers face immediate threat from the fire

779 Any additional or different instruction or guidance for passengers will be shared by the rail system  
780 control room with fire control personnel. These instructions will be specific to the known variables of  
781 the incident.

## 782 **Trapped on a vessel**

783 Passengers on vessels that have professional mariners on board should always follow the advice and  
784 instruction of the crew or captain. This includes container ships, passenger, commercial,  
785 entertainment and tourist vessels.

786 The crew will indicate when it is no longer safe to remain on the boat and entry into the water is  
787 required.

788 There may be occasions where calls are received from a member of the public on board a private or  
789 rented vessel such as a yacht or fishing boat and there are no professional mariners on board to give  
790 instruction or advice so they may look to fire control personnel to provide this.

791 When there is a fire on a vessel, people at risk should move as far away from the fire as possible and  
792 remain on the vessel with their life jackets on.

793 They should not enter a smoke filled space however if they are already in a smoke filled space they  
794 should stay low to the ground where the air is clearer.

795 If a window needs to be broken, the same method of breaking a window contained within FSG –  
796 building fire should be used.

797 Doors or engine hatches should be kept closed where possible to starve the fire of air.

798 People should try to get to the open deck at the top of the boat, this can also be referred to as  
799 topside. This gives the person at risk the opportunity to choose to enter the water if they are in  
800 immediate danger and cannot await rescue. If there is an explosion on board the vessel and the  
801 person at risk is topside, it also enables them to be thrown clear from the vessel and into the water.

## 802 **Trapped on an aircraft**

803 Passenger aircrafts have been designed and engineered to enable passengers to self-evacuate. This  
804 includes sufficient width and length of aisles, emergency exits and method of exit.

805 Passengers should always be informed to leave their belongings and follow the advice and  
806 instruction of the aircraft captain or crew.

807 Any additional or different instruction or guidance for passengers will be shared by the airport  
808 operations control centre with fire control personnel. These instructions will be specific to the  
809 known variables of the incident.

810 If passengers are physically trapped on a small or light aircraft that is on fire following a collision, fire  
811 control personnel may only be able to offer reassurance to casualties.

812 *TACTICAL ACTIONS*

813 Fire control personnel should:

- 814 • Liaise with the operating company control room and provide advice and guidance to people  
815 at risk based on the specifics of the transport
- 816 • Give appropriate guidance to people who are trapped in a road vehicle that is on fire
- 817 • Give appropriate guidance to third party callers who chose to attempt to rescue people who  
818 are trapped in a road vehicle that is on fire
- 819 • Give appropriate guidance to people who are trapped on a railway system that is on fire
- 820 • Give appropriate guidance to people who are trapped on a vessel that is on fire
- 821 • Give appropriate guidance to people who are trapped on an aircraft on fire

822 **Control measure - Assist rescue for people at risk: Fire survival guidance – transport fire**

823 This control measure should be read in conjunction with:

- 824 • Control measure – Assist rescue for people at risk: Survival guidance
- 825 • Control measure – Assist rescue for people at risk: Fire survival guidance

826 *CONTROL MEASURE KNOWLEDGE*

827 Information received from operating companies control rooms should be continually shared with  
828 operational personnel. This includes the number and type of any deployments made by the  
829 operating company.

830 The following information should be gathered by fire control personnel and relayed to operational  
831 personnel and the operating companies control room where appropriate:

- 832 • Reason why people at risk are unable to, or have been instructed not to evacuate, for  
833 example:
  - 834 ○ Trapped by injures
  - 835 ○ Unable to access an emergency exit
  - 836 ○ On board staff instructions

837 The following information should be gathered from the operating companies control room and  
838 shared with operational personnel:

- 839 • Type and size of mode of transport
- 840 • Access and egress information for the mode of transport
- 841 • Number and type of response to the incident by the operating company, for example:  
842 ○ Airport fire service response

843                   ○ Rail Incident Officer (RIO)

844    *TACTICAL ACTIONS*

845    Fire control personnel should:

- 846           • Share information received from people at risk with operational personnel and operating  
847            companies control rooms
- 848           • Share information received from operating companies control rooms with operational  
849            personnel

850    **Hazard - Calls involving people on fire**

851    This hazard should be read in conjunction with:

- 852           • Hazard – Calls from or about people at risk trapped
- 853           • Hazard – Calls from or about people at risk trapped in or by fire

854    *HAZARD KNOWLEDGE*

855    Calls involving people on fire will not usually be received directly from the casualty due to the pain  
856    and distress they will be in. Friends, relatives or bystanders will usually make the emergency call and  
857    should be requested to carry out actions to extinguish the fire on the person and administer initial  
858    first aid until operational personnel or a medical response arrives.

859    It is vital that treatment for burns injuries is administered as soon as possible as this will help to  
860    reduce the severity of the injury. Guidance given by fire control personnel to callers will support this.

861    Callers or people at risk should not be asked to extinguish a separate or main source of fire.

862    This guidance can also be used for burns injuries sustained by other methods.

863    This guidance should be read in conjunction with [Casualty care – thermal or chemical injury](#).

864    **Control measure – Situational awareness: Fire survival guidance – people on fire**

865    This control measure should be read in conjunction with:

- 866           • Control measure – Situational awareness: Survival guidance
- 867           • Control measure – Situational awareness: Fire survival guidance

868    *CONTROL MEASURE KNOWLEDGE*

869    There are several factors which may affect the advice given to callers by fire control personnel, these  
870    include:

- 871           • Who the call is being received from for example:
  - 872                   ○ The casualty
  - 873                   ○ A passer by or person that is with the casualty

874 • The immediate threat to the casualty for example:

875 ○ Whether the person is still on fire or not

876 • The condition of the casualty for example:

877 ○ Disorientation or unconsciousness

878 ○ Shock

879 ○ Hypothermia

880 A change in the casualties condition may affect the tactical plan for operational or medical  
881 personnel, this should be communicated to all responders immediately.

## 882 *TACTICAL ACTIONS*

883 Fire control personnel should:

884 • Continually exchange information relating to the condition of the casualty between the fire  
885 control room, operational personnel and other responders

## 886 **Control measure – Protect people at risk: fire survival guidance – people on fire**

887 This control measure should be read in conjunction with:

888 • Control measure – Protect people at risk: Survival guidance

889 • Control measure – Protect people at risk: Fire survival guidance

## 890 *CONTROL MEASURE KNOWLEDGE*

891 Whilst intermediate guidance can be given by fire control personnel, this should not delay in a  
892 medical response being requested.

## 893 **Stop, drop and roll**

894 The burning process should be stopped as quickly as possible. Prevent the casualty from running as  
895 this may fan the flames and make them burn faster. The casualty should be instructed to lie down on  
896 the floor with the burning side uppermost. As the flames always burn upwards, lying flat will prevent  
897 the flames from involving the face, head and hair. The casualty should roll back and forth until the  
898 flames are out, this is often referred to as stop, drop and roll. If a heavy cotton cloth blanket, rug or  
899 coat or another heavy fabric is to hand, this can also be used to help smother the flames. Once the  
900 flames are out, any fabric used should be removed immediately.

901 If the casualty is panicking, they may need help dropping to the floor, a leg from a third party can be  
902 used to sweep the casualties legs from under them so they drop to the ground.

## 903 **Cool the burn**

904 A burn injury will continue to burn until heat has been taken away. The burn should be cooled  
905 immediately with cool or lukewarm water for as long as possible until operational personnel or a  
906 medical response arrives. Any water source that is available should be used as the benefits of the

907 cooling process outweighs the risk of contamination. Ice, iced water, creams or greasy substances  
908 such as butter must not be used.

909 The use of ice or ice water may lead to numbness causing further damage to the bodies tissue.  
910 Hypothermia is also a risk with ice-cold water. When the burn is being cooled, the process should  
911 not result in shivering. Signs and symptoms of hypothermia should be recognised by fire control  
912 room personnel and appropriate advice given for initial treatment.

913 Further information about signs, symptoms and initial treatment for hypothermia can be found  
914 within water survival guidance.

915 **Remove burnt clothing**

916 Clothing or jewellery that is near the burnt area of skin, including babies nappies should be removed.  
917 Jewellery retains heat and continues tissue damage if left in place. If clothing sticks to the skin it  
918 should be kept cool and wet and left in place, attempts should not be made to peel clothing off  
919 burnt skin.

920 **Keep warm**

921 The casualty should be kept warm, care should be taken to not rub blankets against the burnt area.

922 **Cover the burn**

923 The burn should be covered with a layer of cling film. A clean plastic bag could also be used for burns  
924 to the hand. Wrapping the burn wound:

- 925 • Minimises contamination by shielding the burn wound from secondary infection
- 926 • Reduces pain produced by the exposure of the damaged nerve endings (in partial thickness  
927 burns) to the air currents
- 928 • Provides protection during transport

929 **Sit up**

930 If the face or eyes are burnt, the casualty should sit up as much as possible rather than lying down as  
931 this helps to reduce swelling.

932 **Watch for shock**

933 If the person is uncommunicative, delirious, or the caller indicates that they look pale, they may be  
934 in shock. The casualty should be elevated and blankets used to keep them warm.

935 *STRATEGIC ACTIONS*

936 Fire and rescue services should:

- 937 • Ensure processes are in place that links to clinical advice for people with burns

938 *TACTICAL ACTIONS*

939 Fire control personnel should:

- 940 • Request assistance from medical responders as soon as possible
- 941 • Give appropriate stop, drop and roll advice when required
- 942 • Advise people to cool the burn appropriately
- 943 • Advise people to remove clothing and jewellery where appropriate
- 944 • Give appropriate advice when clothing is stuck to the skin
- 945 • Give appropriate advice to keep warm
- 946 • Advise people how to cover the burn appropriately
- 947 • Advise people to sit up where appropriate
- 948 • Recognise any signs and symptoms of shock and give appropriate advice

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