



**JOINT DOCTRINE: THE
INTEROPERABILITY
FRAMEWORK**



JESIP

JOINT EMERGENCY SERVICES
INTEROPERABILITY PROGRAMME

Working Together – Saving Lives



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Foreword

Welcome to the first edition of the “Joint Doctrine: the interoperability framework”. This guidance focuses on police, fire and ambulance interoperability in the early stages of the response to a major or complex incident. Its purpose is to provide emergency service commanders with a framework to enable them to respond together as effectively as possible.

This guidance has been developed by police, fire and ambulance service colleagues as part of the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP). This is a nationally recognised tri-service programme, staffed solely by representatives from the blue light services, which has the full support of Chief Officers and Government Departments; the Home Office, Cabinet Office, Department for Communities and Local Government and the Department of Health. The programme was set up at the Home Secretary’s request following a number of public enquiries which said joint working between the three emergency services would enhance the collective ability to save lives and reduce harm. Major and complex incidents do not happen very often, but when they do we need to ensure that we have the most efficient, effective and, most importantly, joined-up response that is possible. The public will expect no less.

As a living document this doctrine will be subject to future changes and improvements, as it is tested and incorporated into business as usual. We, as three services, need to ensure that the ethos of working together becomes embedded within our organisations at every level.

We are extremely grateful to those individuals and their supporting organisations who have contributed up to this point. If you have any comments about the document, or any questions as to how you might act upon this doctrine, please email them to JESIP@homeoffice.x.gsi.gov.uk

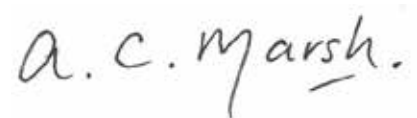
Yours faithfully,



CFO Roy Wilsher



CC Lynne Owens



CEO Anthony Marsh



ARCHIVED



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PART 1 – PRINCIPLES FOR JOINT WORKING



1. Introduction – Doctrine and Guidance

The structure for managing the local multi-agency response to emergencies is based upon the Civil Contingencies Act (2004), which imposes a legal duty on Category 1 responders to assess risk, plan for emergencies and to co-operate and share information with other emergency response organisations. The Act is supported by two sets of guidance; ‘Emergency Preparedness’ and ‘Emergency Response & Recovery’ (ER&R). Emergency Preparedness deals with the pre-emergency (planning) phase. ER&R describes the multi-agency framework for responding to and recovering from emergencies in the UK.

This publication complements ER&R by focussing specifically on the interoperability of the three emergency services in the early stages of response to a rapid onset localised emergency. Its purpose is to provide emergency service commanders with a framework to enable them to effectively respond together. However, the principles described are also applicable to the wider range of Category 1 and 2 response organisations and can be applied to smaller scale incidents, wide-area emergencies, and pre-planned operations.

This Joint Doctrine focuses on the interoperability of the three emergency services whilst also acknowledging that emergency response is a multi-agency activity and the resolution of an emergency will usually involve collaboration with other Category 1 and 2 responders and partner organisations. Doctrine sets out the way responders should train and operate and is built upon a common backbone which defines terminology, principles and ways of working. Joint Doctrine sets out guidance on what responders should do and how they should do it in a multi-agency working environment, in order to achieve the degree of interoperability that is essential to a successful joint response. It does not constitute a set of rules to be applied without thought, but rather seeks to guide, explain and inform.

The Joint Doctrine is an essential element in the hierarchy of guidance shown in Figure 1. It provides commanders, at the scene and elsewhere, with generic guidance on what actions they should undertake when responding to major and complex incidents and the principles are equally relevant to day-to-day joint operations. The guidance contained within this publication should be reflected consistently within individual organisation’s guidance, instructions to their personnel and in training. Separate publications set out specialist ways of working that will apply in specific circumstances such as Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear (CBRN) incidents or Marauding Terrorist Firearms Attacks (MTFA). These specialist response documents should also reflect the generic guidance contained within this publication.



Figure 1 - Emergency Response Documentation Hierarchy for the emergency services

2. The Need for Interoperability

The blue light services, including police, fire and ambulance, will usually be the first to arrive at the scene of a rapid onset emergency. To achieve the best possible outcomes, all responders will need to be able to work together effectively as soon as they arrive at the scene.

The requirement for a joint response is not new to the emergency services and should already be in place for routine day to day working. However, the findings and lessons identified by many public enquiries and inquests have highlighted cases where the emergency services should have worked better together and shown much greater levels of co-operation and co-ordination. There is a requirement for better co-ordination and co-operation between the three emergency services who are normally the primary on-scene responders in response to a rapid onset emergency. Therefore, while the principles of interoperability are also applicable to the wider range of Category 1 and 2 responders, this document is focussed upon the emergency services element of the response.

Interoperability is defined as the extent to which organisations can work together coherently as a matter of routine. To ensure interoperability exists between the emergency services in England, Wales and Scotland, which might involve cross-border mutual aid at any time, all responder organisations must make certain that their single service response arrangements, and local procedures, are in alignment with this Joint Doctrine and in accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 guidance set out in Emergency Response and Recovery.

Commanders, at every level, should be able to demonstrate that they have received appropriate interoperability training in both their preparation and response arrangements to ensure the highest possible levels of joint working. With appropriate training and exercising between the emergency services, as well as other Category 1 and 2 responders, the joint response will be significantly more effective in saving lives and reducing harm.

2.1 Definitions

There are a number of terms that are fundamental to successful joint working and these must be understood by all responders. The definitions and a short explanation of each can be found at Annex A.

3. Principles for Joint Working

The principles must be applied by responders when they are determining an appropriate course of action. They should be reflected in **Joint** or **Standard Operating Procedures** for joint working in the response to and co-ordination of an emergency.

The public expects that the emergency services will work together, particularly in the initial response, in order to preserve life and reduce harm at any emergency. The purpose of clear, simple principles is to help commanders to take action under pressure that will enable the achievement of successful outcomes. This simplicity is of paramount importance in the early stages of an incident or emergency, when clear, robust decisions and actions need to be taken with minimum delay in an often rapidly changing environment. At the scene, the expected sequence of actions would comprise the first meeting of police, fire and ambulance commanders (co-location); a joint assessment of the situation and prevailing risks (communication, joint risk assessment and shared situational awareness); and a co-ordinated plan for action.

3.1 Co-location

Co-location of commanders is essential and allows those commanders to perform the functions of command, control and co-ordination, face to face, at a single and easily identified location. This is known as the Forward Command Post (FCP), which is a location near to the scene, where the response by the emergency services is managed.

3.2 Communication

Communication is the passage of clear, unambiguous and timely information relevant to an emergency situation. Meaningful and effective communication underpins effective joint working. The sharing of information, free of acronyms, across service boundaries is essential to operational success. This starts through pre-planning and between Control Rooms prior to deployment of resources.

Communication is the capability to exchange reliable and accurate information i.e. critical information about hazards, risks and threats, as well as understanding each organisation's responsibilities and capabilities. The understanding of any information shared ensures the achievement of shared situational awareness which underpins the best possible outcomes of an incident. Common symbols and terminology should be used to communicate common meaning amongst all responders. Further information about symbols and terminology can be found in Annex B.

This guidance is not intended to provide specific advice on the technical solutions that are available to the emergency services. A technical solution already exists for the blue light services, the replacement of which is subject to a separate, cross-governmental and emergency service programme.

3.3 Co-ordination

Co-ordination involves the integration of the priorities, resources, decision making and response activities of each emergency service in order to avoid potential conflicts, prevent duplication of effort, minimise risk and promote successful outcomes. Effective co-ordination generally requires one service to act in a “lead” capacity, such as chairing co-ordination meetings and ensuring an effective response. The lead service will usually be the Police Service. However, in certain circumstances other services/agencies may be a more appropriate choice, depending upon the nature of the emergency, the phase of the response and the capabilities required.

3.4 Joint understanding of risk

Risk arises from threats and/or hazards which will be seen, understood and treated differently by different emergency services. In the context of a joint response, sharing information and understanding about the likelihood and potential impact of risks and the availability and implications of potential control measures will ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, that the agreed aim and objectives are not compromised. This will include ensuring the safety of responders and mitigating the impact of risks on members of the public, infrastructure and the environment. Further information on the joint assessment of risk can be found in Part 2 – Ways of Working.

3.5 Shared situational awareness

This is a common understanding of the circumstances and immediate consequences of the emergency, together with an appreciation of the available capabilities and emergency services’ priorities. Achieving shared situational awareness is essential for effective interoperability in the emergency response and can be achieved by using the Joint Decision Model (JDM) found in Part 2 – Ways of Working. Shared situational awareness relates not only to a common understanding between incident commanders, but also between control rooms and all tiers of the command structure.



ANNEXES

A. Definition of Key Terms in Interoperability

B. Common Terminology in Emergency Management



Annex A

Definition of Key Terms in Interoperability

Capability - A demonstrable ability to respond to and recover from a particular threat or hazard.

Command - The exercise of vested authority, that is associated with a role or rank within an organisation, to give direction in order to achieve defined objectives. Command is carried out by those who have been given authority (through role or rank) over others, for a specific operation or incident, to make decisions and give direction in order to achieve jointly defined and agreed objectives. Personnel who provide subject matter expertise or advice do so in support of the Operations or Tactical Commander and as part of the Command Support Team.

Commander - Personnel who, by function or rank, are charged with ensuring the readiness of their teams, forces or organisations to discharge their stated duties and obligations.

Control - The application of authority, combined with the capability to manage resources, in order to achieve defined objectives. Control is defined as the authority and capability of an organisation to direct the actions of its own personnel. While one emergency service cannot exercise command over another, it may be appropriate for service commanders to grant the authority to exercise control of their organisation's personnel or assets to a co-ordinating group or commander of the designated lead service for a specific task.

Co-ordination - The integration of multi-agency efforts and available capabilities, which may be interdependent, in order to achieve defined objectives. Co-ordination occurs at one or more of three ascending levels - Operational, Tactical and Strategic, with national level co-ordination in the most serious of emergencies.

Emergency - An event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare in a place in the UK, the environment of a place in the UK, or the security of the UK or of a place in the UK.

Guiding Responsibility - Where control of an individual, as defined in Annex A, is transferred to another emergency service for the purposes of a specific task. Legal liability for the actions of the said individual remains, at all times, with the service of which the individual is an employee.

Joint Learning - The identification of lessons from exercises or operations that are relevant to joint working and the process of effecting and embedding change in organisations and behaviours in response to those lessons. Learning is the process of developing knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours. It is therefore essential that lessons identified about joint working, from event or exercise debriefs or other mechanisms, should be captured, assessed, shared and acted upon jointly in order to promote continuous improvement but also to confirm good practice where it is identified.

Joint Working - A number of organisations working together on a course, or courses of action, to achieve agreed emergency response objectives. The public expects that the emergency services will work together, particularly in the initial response emergency, in order to preserve life and reduce harm. Individual Police, Fire & Rescue or Ambulance Service priorities must not override the degree of multi-agency co-operation required to efficiently and effectively work together. The aim is to use the available resources to the best collective effect to achieve the jointly agreed

objectives for a successful response. It is essential that the activities of one responder service do not impede or detract from the efficiency of another.

Major Incident – *An event or situation requiring a response under one or more of the emergency services' major incident plans. A major incident may be declared by a single blue light service, or jointly. It is feasible that only one service may determine an emergency as a major incident based on the type of incident and scale of their resources required. This may not necessarily mean it is a major incident for all other services.*

Personal Data - *Data which relates to a living individual or group who can be identified from the data and includes any expression of opinion about the individual and any indications of intentions in respect of the individual. (Data Protection Act 1998).*

Rapid Onset Emergency – *An emergency which develops quickly and usually with immediate effects, thereby limiting the time available to consider response options.*

Rising Tide Emergency – *Event or situation with a lead-in time of days, weeks or even months e.g. health pandemic, flooding or pop concert, the final impact of which may not be apparent early on.*

Sensitive Personal Data - *Personal data consisting of information as to (including but not exclusively): race/ ethnic origin, religious beliefs, physical or mental health and commission or alleged commission of any offence. (Data Protection Act 1998).*

Annex B

Common Terminology in Emergency Management

One of the barriers to achieving shared situational awareness is the use of terminology that either means different things to different people, or is simply not understood across different services. Defining commonly understood terminology is desirable and to a large degree attainable, but emergency responders must always be attentive to the risk that their own understanding of concepts and specific terms is either not understood, or misunderstood, by others. Where the potential for confusion exists, responders should ensure that they use plain English.

A lexicon of common terminology has been established to define and promote commonly understood terms in emergency management and this is introduced below, together with specific definitions for terms critical to interoperability. Also introduced below is the set of common map symbols which are linked to the lexicon and should be adopted by emergency responders.

Lexicon of Common Terminology for UK Emergency Management

Without a common understanding of what specific terms, phrases and associated map symbols mean, multi-agency working will always carry the risk of potentially serious misunderstandings, the consequences of which could be extremely severe. Since 2007, the Civil Contingencies Secretariat in the Cabinet Office has been working with a wide range of partners to build and maintain a single, authoritative point of reference for civil protection terminology and map symbology. These are summarised below.

A lexicon is a collection of terms from a specific area of work or knowledge that are defined and associated with additional user-relevant information. This lexicon establishes common, agreed definitions for terms used in multi-agency emergency management. It is updated regularly and is available online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-responder-interoperability-lexicon>

Emergency services and other responders are encouraged to cross-reference definitions given in their own organisation's documents to the lexicon and to adopt the definitions given in the lexicon. Such convergence on common terminology is a fundamental building block for interoperability.

In some cases specific terms or acronyms can have two or more meanings. This is not desirable, as there is potential for confusion. It reinforces the point that in spite of tools such as the lexicon, achieving commonly understood terminology is the responsibility of emergency responders on the ground. Where there is any doubt at all about what is meant by a specific term then individuals must check and confirm there is a common understanding.

Where additional terms should be included in the lexicon, or responders wish to discuss existing definitions then contact details can be found through the web link above. The Cabinet Office hold and maintain the lexicon as a single, authoritative point of reference, but the emergency responder community shares the responsibility to maintain and grow the lexicon, so all communications are welcomed.

Common Map Symbology for UK Emergency Management

Maps are widely used in emergency management, but if different organisations use different map symbols to denote the same feature (e.g. a rendezvous point (RVP) or inner cordon) then there is scope for dangerous confusion and the potential of the map as a tool to co-ordinate multi-agency operations is severely curtailed. For this reason, the Cabinet Office and Ordnance Survey (OS) have collaborated in developing and disseminating a core set of common map symbols for use in emergency management.

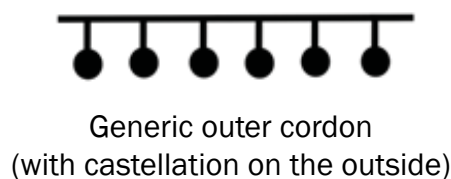
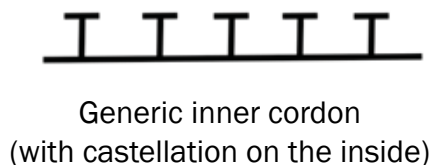
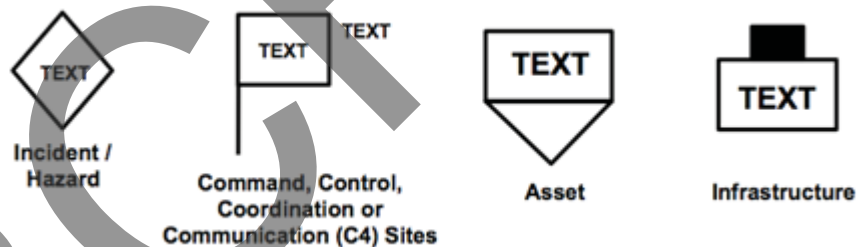
These can be found online and there is a link to the download page on the OS website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/emergency-responder-interopability-common-map-symbols>

At the present time the symbol set is limited to the following core features:

- Incidents and hazards
- Command, Control, Co-ordination or Communication sites
- Assets
- Infrastructure
- Cordons, zones and areas.

The symbols are developed from a number of basic building blocks, illustrated below:





PART 2 – WAYS OF WORKING



1. Ways of Working

All personnel called upon to respond to an emergency situation must be suitably trained and equipped to carry out and discharge the duties they are assigned to. It is possible that during the early stages of an incident response, employees of one service may spontaneously carry out tasks normally the responsibility of another. However, as soon as sufficient personnel are in place, unequivocal command and control of functions for which that service is normally responsible must be put in place.

Local Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) or similar instructions/directives must include direction that promotes ways of working that allow for integrated effort to take place with partner agencies. Such SOPs will need to focus on specific actions and considerations, as necessary, for the discharge of specific functions. However, these instructions should also make clear, at the outset, the paramount need to work jointly with multi-agency commanders and to avoid any conflict of effort between different responder organisations.

The use of the Joint Decision Model (JDM), which includes the approach to establishing shared situational awareness and undertaking a joint assessment of risk, will enable efficient and effective joint working amongst the blue light responders and help determine their priorities for action.

2. The Joint Decision Model (JDM)

A wide range of decision making models exist, including specific models used by the individual emergency services. Such models exist to practically support decision makers working under difficult circumstances and a guiding principle is that they should not be over complicated. One of the difficulties facing commanders from different organisations in a joint emergency response is how to bring together the available information, reconcile objectives and then make effective decisions together. The JDM, shown at Figure 2, has been developed to enable this to happen.

In common with most decision models, the JDM is organised around three primary considerations:

Situation: what is happening, what are the impacts, what are the risks, what might happen and what is being done about it? Situational awareness is having an appropriate knowledge of these factors.

Direction: what end state is desired, what are the aims and objectives of the emergency response and what overarching values and priorities will inform and guide this?

Action: what needs to be decided and what needs to be done to resolve the situation and achieve the desired end state?

The JDM develops these considerations and sets out the various stages of how joint decisions should be reached. One of the guiding principles of the JDM is that decision makers will use their judgement and experience in deciding what additional questions to ask and considerations to take into account, to reach a jointly agreed decision. They must therefore be free to interpret the JDM for themselves, reasonably and according to the circumstances facing them at any given time. Strict adherence to the stepped process outlined in the JDM should always be secondary to achieving desired outcomes, particularly in time sensitive situations. A detailed and well practised understanding of the JDM will facilitate clear and ordered thinking under stress. The following sections summarise the questions and considerations that commanders should think about in following the model.

The JDM can be used for a *rapid onset* or a *rising tide* emergency to enable the establishment of shared situational awareness.



Figure 2 - The Joint Decision Model

2.1 Working Together – Saving Lives, Reducing Harm

Joint decisions must be made with reference to the over arching or primary aim of any response to an emergency: to save lives and reduce harm. This is achieved through a co-ordinated, multi-agency response. Decision makers should have this uppermost in their minds throughout the decision making process.

2.2 Gather and share information and intelligence

Situational awareness is about having appropriate answers to the following questions: what is happening, what are the impacts, what are the risks, what might happen and what is being done about it? In the context of the JDM, shared situational awareness becomes critically important. Shared situational awareness is achieved by sharing information and understanding between the organisations involved, to build a stronger, multi-dimensional awareness of events, their implications, associated risks and potential outcomes.

For major and complex emergencies, whether a *rapid onset* or a *rising tide* event, it is a simple fact that no one service can initially appreciate all relevant dimensions of an emergency. This deeper and wider understanding will only come from meaningful communication between the emergency services and other emergency responders. This should be built upon agreed procedures to share the required information and a commitment to use commonly understood terminology rather than service specific terminology or jargon where this may impede understanding. In simple terms, commanders cannot assume other emergency service personnel see things or say things in the same way, and a sustained effort is required to reach a common view and understanding of events, risks and their implications.

Decision making in the context of an emergency, including decisions involving the sharing of information, does not remove the statutory obligations of agencies or individuals, but it is recognised that such decisions are made against an overriding priority to save life and reduce harm.

The sharing of personal data and sensitive personal data (including police intelligence) requires further consideration before sharing across agencies and the JDM can be used as a tool to guide decision making on what to release and to whom. In particular, in considering the legal and policy implications, the following are relevant:

- A legal framework to share information is required – in an ‘emergency’ situation this will generally come from Common Law (save life/property), the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 or the Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- Formal Information Sharing Agreements (ISAs) may exist between some or all responding agencies but such existence does not prohibit sharing of information outside of these ISAs
- There should be a specific purpose for sharing information
- Information shared needs to be proportionate to the purpose and no more than necessary
- The need to inform the recipient if any of the information is potentially unreliable or inaccurate
- The need to ensure that the information is shared safely and securely – it must comply with the Government Protective Marking Scheme (GPMS – replaced by the Classifications Policy in 2014) if appropriate
- What information is shared, when, with whom and why, should be recorded.

The following mnemonic should be used when passing information, in the initial stages, between emergency responders and Control Rooms to enable the establishment of shared situational awareness:

- **M**ajor incident declared?
- **E**xact location;
- **T**ype of incident e.g. explosion, building collapse;
- **H**azards present, potential or suspected;
- **A**ccess – routes that are safe to use;
- **N**umber, type, severity of casualties;
- **E**mergency services now present and those required.

2.3 Jointly assess risks, develop a working strategy

Understanding risk is central to emergency response. The Civil Contingencies Act places a requirement on all Category 1 responders to have an accurate and *shared* understanding of the risks which would or may affect the geographical area for which they are responsible. A key task for commanders is to build and maintain a common understanding of the full range of risks and the way that those risks may be increased, reduced or controlled by decisions made and subsequent actions taken. In a major or complex emergency the blue light services will have unique insights into those risks and by sharing that knowledge, a common understanding can be established.

The joint assessment of risk is the process by which commanders work towards a common understanding of threats, hazards and the likelihood of them being realised, in order to inform decisions on deployments and the risk control measures that are required. Risk mitigation measures to be employed by individual services also need to be understood by the other responding organisations in order to ensure any potential for unintended consequences are identified in advance of activity commencing. A joint assessment of the prevailing risks also limits

the likelihood of any service following a course of action in which the other services are unable to participate. This, therefore, increases the operational effectiveness and efficiency of the response as well as the probability of a successful resolution of the incident.

It is rare for a complete or perfect picture to exist and therefore a working strategy, for a rapid onset emergency, should be based on the information available at the time. The following should be taken into account when developing a working strategy:

- **What** are the aims and objectives to be achieved?
- **Who by** – Police, Fire, Ambulance and partner organisations?
- **When** – timescales, deadlines and milestones?
- **Where** – what locations?
- **Why** – what is the rationale? Is this consistent with the overall strategic aims and objectives?
- **How** are these tasks going to be achieved?

In order to deliver an effective integrated multi-agency operational response plan, the following key steps must be undertaken:

Identification of hazards – this will begin from the initial call received by a Control Room and will continue as first responders arrive on scene. Information gathered by individual agencies must be disseminated to all first responders and Control Rooms effectively. The use of the mnemonic **METHANE** will assist in a common approach.

Dynamic Risk Assessment – undertaken by individual agencies, reflecting the tasks / objectives to be achieved, the hazards that have been identified and the likelihood of harm from those hazards.

Identification of the tasks - each individual agency should identify and consider the specific tasks to be achieved according to its own role and responsibilities.

Apply control measures – each agency should consider and apply appropriate control measures to ensure any risk is as low as reasonably practicable

Integrated multi-agency operational response plan – the development of this plan should consider the outcomes of the hazard assessment and service risk assessments, within the context of the agreed priorities for the incident.

Recording of decision – the outcomes of the joint assessment of risk should be recorded, together with the identified priorities and the agreed multi-agency response plan, when resources permit. It is acknowledged that in the early stages of the incident this may not be possible, but it should be noted that post-incident scrutiny inevitably focuses on the earliest decision making.

2.4 Consider powers, policies and procedures

Decision making in an emergency will be focussed on how to achieve the desired end state and there will always be various constraints and considerations that will shape how this is achieved. Powers, policies and procedures relate to any relevant laws, operating procedures or policies that may impact on the desired response plan and the capabilities that are available to be deployed. They may impact on how individual services will need to operate and co-operate in order to achieve the agreed aims and objectives. In the context of a joint response, a common understanding of any relevant powers, policies, capabilities and procedures is essential in order that the activities of one service compliment and do not compromise, the approach of the other services.

2.5 Identify options and contingencies

There will almost always be more than one option to achieve the desired end state and it is good practice that a range of options are identified and rigorously evaluated. Any potential option or course of action should be evaluated with respect to:

- Suitability – does it fit with the strategic direction?
- Feasibility – in resource terms can it be done?
- Acceptability – is it legal, morally defensible and justifiable?

An option may include deploying resources, briefing the public (mainstream and social media) or developing a contingency or emergency plan. Whichever options are chosen, it is essential that commanders are clear what they are required to carry out and there should be clearly agreed procedures for communicating any decision to defer, abort or initiate a specific tactic.

Contingencies relate to events that may occur and the arrangements that are put in place to respond to them should they occur. For example, strong evidence may suggest that an emergency is being successfully managed and the impacts safely controlled, but there remains a likelihood that the situation could deteriorate with significant impacts. Simply hoping for the best is not a defensible option and a contingency in this case may be to define measures to adjust the response should the situation deteriorate.

2.6 Take action and review what happened

Building situational awareness, setting direction and evaluating options all lead to taking the actions that are judged to be the most effective and efficient in resolving an emergency and returning to a new normality. As the JDM is a continuous loop, it is essential that the results of those actions are fed back into the first box – Gather and share information and intelligence – which establishes shared situational awareness. This will, in turn, shape any revision to the direction and risk assessment and the cycle continues.

3. Operational, Tactical and Strategic Levels of Command

Operational, Tactical and Strategic are tiers of command adopted by each of the emergency services and are role, not rank, related. These functions are broadly equivalent to those described as Bronze, Silver and Gold in other documents about emergency procedures. It should be understood that the titles do not convey seniority of service or rank, but depict the function carried out by that particular person or group. The over arching response structure is shown at Figure 3.

For the purpose of clarity, this document refers only to the generic tiers of command and not individual service specific functional activities. In essence, there must be a clear and identified commander responsible for co-ordinating their service's activity at each of the identified command levels.

It is essential that the appointed commanders of each service, operating at every level, liaise with each other at the earliest opportunity. Operational Commanders, particularly, must make every effort to achieve the closest co-ordination by meeting face-to-face.

3.1 Operational

The Operational Commander will control and deploy the resources of their respective service within a functional or geographical area and implement direction provided by the Tactical Commander. As the incident progresses and more resources attend the scene, the level of supervision will increase in proportion.

It is vital that both Operational and Tactical Commanders of each service are easily identifiable on the incident ground. By using this universal structure, the emergency services will be able to communicate with each other and understand each other's functions and authority. The roles and responsibilities of Operational Commanders are at Annex C.

3.2 Tactical

The Tactical Commander will be located where they can maintain effective tactical command of the operation. This includes consideration of effective joint working with other services and other factors such as access to communications systems. They should attend the scene dependent on these considerations and the nature of the incident. For example, a single contained scene with limited wider impact – more likely to attend scene; multiple scenes or mobile threat and significant wider impact – more likely to command from an established Control Room. The roles and responsibilities of Tactical Commanders are at Annex D.

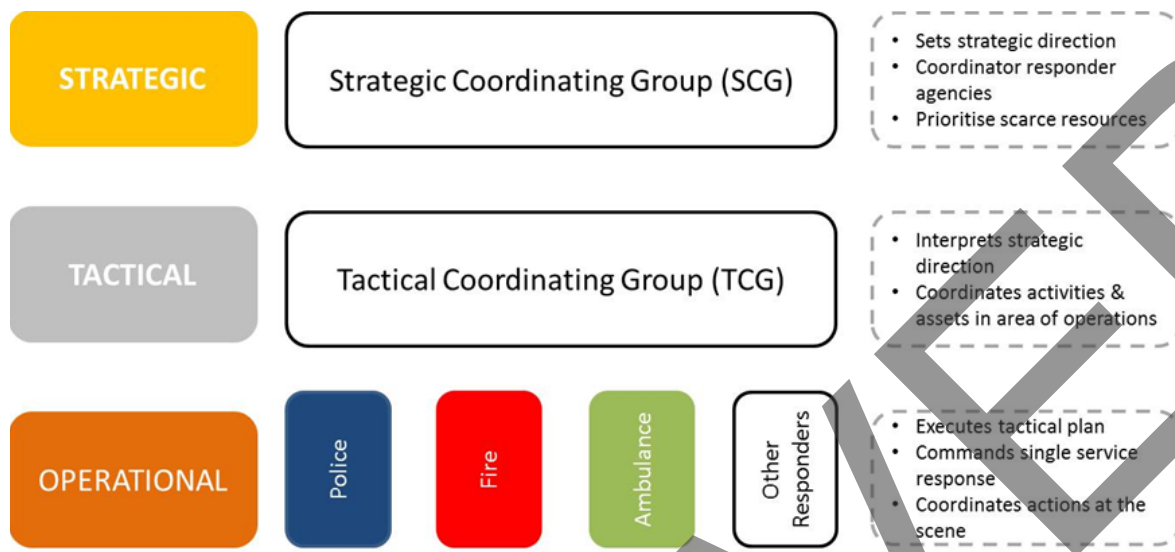


Figure 3 - Overarching Response Structure

3.3 Strategic

The Strategic Commander in overall charge of each service is responsible for formulating the strategy for the incident. Each Strategic Commander has overall command of the resources of their own organisation, but will delegate implementation decisions to their respective tactical level commanders. At the earliest opportunity, a strategic group will determine/confirm a specific response strategy and record a strategy statement. The roles and responsibilities of Strategic Commanders are shown at Annex E.

3.4 Inter-agency resources

Any service may request the temporary assistance of personnel and equipment of another. In these circumstances, while the supporting service will relinquish the immediate control of those resources to the other service for the duration of the task, it will nevertheless keep overall command of its personnel and equipment at all times. Personnel from one service who help another in this way should only be given tasks for which they are trained and should not supplement the other service in a potentially dangerous way.

There is also a network of National Inter-Agency Liaison Officers (NILOs) who are trained and qualified to provide advice as part of the Command Support Team.

3.5 Overarching Response Structure

The details of the operation and co-ordination of sub-national and national levels for emergency response can be found in the UK Government Concept of Operations and the relevant chapters of Emergency Response and Recovery. The nature and severity of the emergency will determine the need for the involvement of the sub-national and national tiers, whilst its location will dictate the potential engagement of the Devolved Administrations in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

The purpose of the national level, whether managed by a Lead Government Department (LGD) or cross-government working conducted through the Cabinet Office Briefing Rooms (COBR), is to address co-ordination across all relevant government departments and across and between multiple local Strategic Coordinating Groups (SCGs). This includes the marshalling, prioritisation

and allocation of scarce national resources (e.g. heavy lift helicopters) to local control. The invocation of national and sub-national arrangements do not relieve or override the local responsibilities of the SCG, which remain unchanged, although their considerations will be informed and influenced by national policies, strategy and coordinating instructions. The roles and responsibilities of an SCG together with a standing agenda, are shown at Annex F.

3.6 Joint Learning

Many post event debriefs and inquiries have highlighted specific learning points to improve future response efforts. Single service debriefs and post-event investigations have similarly highlighted the need for internal improvements.

In order to facilitate operational debriefing and to provide evidence for inquiries (whether judicial, public, technical, inquest or of some other form), it is essential to keep records. Single agency and inter-agency debriefing processes should aim to capture information while memories are fresh. For this reason a joint hot debrief should be undertaken by commanders as soon as practicable following the event.

Learning is the acquisition and development of knowledge, skills and attitudes which determine behaviour and how people will respond to circumstances. All three elements are important. How people learn is far from straightforward and it may be achieved through direct experience, study of the experience and insights of others, or being taught, either formally or in various informal ways.

It is important to distinguish between lessons identified and lessons learned. Identifying lessons is the process of extracting and communicating issues that require some form of change to avoid negative events occurring again, or to reinforce good practice. Learning lessons is the more complex process of making and embedding those changes in a way that is reflected in how organisations operate and individuals behave.

Joint learning describes both the identification of lessons relevant to joint working and the process of learning those lessons. Individual services have their own approaches for identifying and learning lessons. Building and sustaining interoperability requires that these lessons are shared in order that unintended consequences (e.g. change that enhances the efficiency of single service operations but to the detriment of the effectiveness of joint operations) are minimised and opportunities for greater interoperability are realised. This requires a commitment to sharing and prioritising lessons with implications for joint working.

Lesson identification, dissemination and the development of subsequent action plans to make and embed change should be undertaken through a formal debrief process managed by the Local Resilience Forum (LRF). Further work is being undertaken by JESIP as part of the legacy arrangements to ensure that lessons identified from joint working are referred to a national Tri-Service Governance Board for consideration. This will ensure that any associated action, either single or joint service, as a result of this joint learning of lessons is made and the changes embedded into how organisations operate and individuals behave. Part of this work will be to consider the opportunities for joint debriefs and how this can be facilitated and formally structured.



ANNEXES

- C. Operational Commander Roles and Responsibilities**
- D. Tactical Commander Roles and Responsibilities**
- E. Strategic Commander Roles and Responsibilities**
- F. Strategic Coordination Group Roles and Responsibilities**



Annex C

Operational Commander Roles & Responsibilities

The over arching aim of the Operational Commander is to ensure rapid and effective actions are implemented that save lives, minimise harm and mitigate the incident. To achieve this you will need to:

- Make an initial assessment of the situation and ensure appropriate resources are requested and where appropriate, that a declaration of a major incident takes place;
- Have an understanding of the role of each agency in the effective management and co-ordination of victims, survivors and relatives;
- Use the JDM to establish shared situational awareness by agreeing a common view of the situation, its consequences and potential outcomes and the actions required for its resolution;
- Carry out a briefing at the earliest opportunity. Ensure the message is clear and commonly understood, at regular intervals;
- Convene joint meetings and use the JDM to share and coordinate information, intelligence and operational plans, to ensure multi-agency compatibility and a clear understanding of the initial tactical priorities and ongoing tactics;
- Using the JDM, maintain shared situational awareness through effective communication to all multi-agency organisations, to assist in the implementation of the operational plan;
- Using the JDM, construct a joint action plan, and priorities necessary for its execution, in sufficient detail for each service to have a clear understanding of the other responders' future activities by nature, location and time. Understand all the multi-agency Operational Commander roles, core responsibilities, requirements and capabilities (including gaps);
- Identify and agree the triggers, signals and arrangements for the emergency evacuation of the scene or area within it, or similar urgent control measures.
- Using the JDM, conduct, record and share ongoing dynamic risk assessments, putting in place appropriate control measures with appropriate actions and review;
- Understand how continually changing hazards/risks affect each organisation and work with your multi-agency colleagues to address these issues;
- Ensure your legal and statutory responsibilities are met and action them in relation to the health, safety and welfare of individuals from your organisation during the response;
- Make and share decisions within your agreed level of responsibility, being cognisant of consequence management. Disseminate these decisions for action to multi-agency colleagues;
- Using the JDM, identify and action the challenges your organisation's operational plan may cause multi-agency partners;
- Determine whether the situation requires the activation of the next level of command support (Tactical Co-ordinating Group) and make appropriate recommendation;
- Update the Tactical Commander on any changes, including any variation in agreed multi-agency tactics within their geographical/functional area of responsibility;

- Ensure appropriate support at the scene by your organisation, in terms of communications operatives and loggists - if available NILO support or equivalent should be provided. The amount and type of support will be determined by the incident;
- Consider organisational post-incident procedures.

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Annex D

Tactical Commander Key Roles and Responsibilities

The overarching aim of the Tactical Commander is to ensure rapid and effective actions are implemented that save lives, minimise harm and mitigate the incident. The Joint Decision Model (JDM) should be used as the standing agenda for Tactical Co-ordinating Group (TCG) meetings. To achieve the overarching aim, you will need to:

- Be aware of and understand the multi-agency command structure, commander roles, responsibilities, requirements and capabilities (including gaps) and monitor the operational command structure including functional roles;
- Determine whether the situation merits the activation of the strategic level of co-ordination and recommend accordingly;
- Establish a common view of the situation between the responder agencies. Initiate (if appropriate) and identify the chair of a multi-agency TCG meeting at the earliest opportunity, and then at regular intervals, to ensure shared situational awareness;
- Construct and agree the overall joint intent, objectives and concept of operations for their achievement within a joint plan. At regular intervals assess and disseminate, through the appropriate communication links, the available information and intelligence to properly evaluate threats, hazards, vulnerabilities and own actions in order to establish and maintain multi-agency shared situational awareness and promote effective decision making;
- Provide accurate and timely information to inform and protect communities, working with the media and utilising social media through a multi-agency approach;
- Understand how continually changing threats and hazards affect each organisation and work with multi-agency colleagues to conduct joint dynamic risk assessments, putting in place appropriate mitigation and management arrangements to continually monitor and respond to the changing nature of emergencies for your organisation;
- Ensure your legal and statutory responsibilities are met and doctrine considered in relation to the health, safety, human rights, data protection and welfare of individuals from your organisation during the response;
- Share and co-ordinate operational plans to ensure multi-agency compatibility and understanding of both the initial tactical priorities and ongoing tactics;
- Identify and agree a common multi-agency forward control point for all Operational Commanders and remain suitably located in order to maintain effective tactical command of the incident or operation and maintain shared situational awareness;
- Manage and co-ordinate, where required, multi-agency resources and activities, providing a joined up and directed response;
- Liaise with relevant organisations to address the longer term priorities of restoring essential services, and help to facilitate the recovery of affected communities;
- Ensure that all tactical decisions made, and the rationale behind them, are documented in a decision log, to ensure that a clear audit trail exists for all multi-agency debriefs and future multi-agency learning;
- Facilitate or make available debriefing facilities (supporting the Operational Commander and debriefing them).

Annex E

Strategic Commander Roles & Responsibilities

- Protect life, property and the environment;
- Set, review, communicate and update the strategy, based on available intelligence and the threat and risk;
- Attend and possibly chair a Strategic Co-ordinating Group (SCG), if established, or consider the need to request that a SCG is set up;
- Consult partner agencies and community groups when determining the strategy;
- Become involved in making tactical level decisions, where appropriate;
- Consider setting tactical parameters within which the Tactical tier can work;
- Become involved in briefings where appropriate;
- Remain available to other agency Strategic or Tactical tiers of command, to ensure that appropriate communication mechanisms exist at a local, regional and national level;
- Ensure that, where appropriate, command protocols are set, agreed and understood by all relevant parties;
- Secure strategic resources in order to resolve the incident and prioritise the allocation of resources, where appropriate;
- Ensure that there are clear lines of communication between Category 1 and 2 responders and appropriate agencies;
- Review and ensure the resilience and effectiveness of the command team, identify the requirements for assistance from the wider resilience community and manage them accordingly;
- Plan beyond the immediate response phase for recovering from the emergency and returning to normality;
- Have overall responsibility within the command structure for health and safety, diversity, equality and human rights compliance and ensuring that relevant impact assessments are completed;
- Identify the level of support needed to resolve the incident or operation and resource your agency's response;
- Have responsibility for the development of communication and media strategies;
- Carry out a post-incident hot debrief, and debrief.

Annex F

Strategic Co-ordinating Group Roles & Responsibilities

The purpose of an SCG (as set out in the non-statutory guidance contained in Emergency Response and Recovery) is to take overall responsibility for the multi-agency management of the emergency and establish the policy and strategic framework within which lower levels of command and co-ordinating groups will work. The SCG will:

- Determine and promulgate a clear strategic aim and objectives and review them regularly;
- Establish a policy framework for the overall management of the event or situation;
- Prioritise the requirements of the tactical tier and allocate personnel and resources accordingly;
- Formulate and implement media handling and public communication plans, potentially delegating this to one responding agency;
- Direct planning and operations beyond the immediate response in order to facilitate the recovery process.

The SCG does not have the collective authority to issue executive orders to individual responder agencies. Each organisation retains its own command authority and defined responsibilities and exercises command of its own operations in the normal way. However, the co-ordinated direction and instructions that the SCG produce will be converted by each responder into appropriate commands down its own command structure and transmitted directly to all subordinate Tactical Co-ordinating Groups. These are well practised and understood arrangements that are used regularly across the country.

It will normally, but not always, be the role of the police to co-ordinate activity with other organisations and therefore to chair the SCG. The police are particularly likely to field an SCG chair where there is an immediate threat to human life, a possibility that the emergency was a result of criminal or terrorist activity, or where there are significant public order implications. Under these circumstances, the same person may be the Police Strategic Commander and the SCG Chair. In other types of emergency, for instance certain health or maritime scenarios, an agency other than the police may initiate and lead the SCG.

The SCG may take more than an hour to set up and obtain a clear picture of unfolding events. As a first priority it must formulate a strategy with key objectives that will encompass and provide focus for all of the activity of the responding organisations. To ensure that co-ordinated effort is enabled, even before the SCG first meets, a working strategy should be immediately available to promote priority actions. When the SCG meets and gains a full understanding of the situation, they should then review and amend the working strategy and adjust objectives and priorities as necessary. A working strategy that should be used as the default initial start point is provided overleaf, together with initial objectives and enabling actions for further consideration.

The SCG should be based at an appropriate location away from the scene. The location at which the SCG meets, with its supporting staff in place, is referred to as the Strategic Co-ordination Centre. This will usually, but not always be at the headquarters of the lead service or organisation

(e.g. Police Headquarters). The location of meetings may change when another agency takes the lead for the Recovery Co-ordination Group when the focus moves from response to recovery.

SCG STANDING STRATEGY AND MEETING AGENDA

Standing Strategy to Enable the Immediate Response Activity to any Emergency Situation

To contain the situation in order to save lives and limit the effect of both the direct consequences created by the emergency event and any indirect consequences caused by responder activity.

Governing Objectives

- Protect and preserve life;
- Mitigate and minimise the impact of challenging events;
- Maintain life support infrastructure and essential services;
- Promote restoration and improvement activity in the aftermath of a challenging event.

Enabling Activity

The following activities will need to be in place to promote an effective response:

- The creation and sharing of a Common Information Picture of unfolding events across all of the responding organisations;
- Simplified procedures for making joint decisions and issue of timely direction;
- Prioritisation of tasks;
- Allocation of finite resources;
- Cross boundary co-operation between partners.

Functional Activities

The governing objectives above are designed to encompass but not prioritise (that is the function of commanders at every level) the following list of activities:

- Saving and preserving human life;
- Relieving suffering;
- Containing the emergency, limiting its escalation and spread;
- Providing the public and businesses with warnings, information and advice;
- Protecting the health and safety of responding personnel;
- Safeguarding the environment;
- As far as is reasonably practicable protecting property;
- Maintaining or restoring critical activities;
- Maintaining normal services at an appropriate level;
- Promoting and facilitating self-help within the community;
- Facilitating investigations and inquiries (by scene preservation, record keeping);
- Facilitating the recovery of the community (including humanitarian assistance, economic infrastructure and environmental impacts);

- Evaluating the response and recovery effort;
- Identifying and taking action to implement lessons learnt;
- Upholding the rule of law.

SCG Meeting - Standing Agenda

Preliminaries: Pre notified seating plan by organisation & name plates for attendees in place

Item

Lead

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Introductions (by exception and only where deemed necessary) | Chair |
| 2. Declaration of items for urgent attention | Chair |
| 3. Confirmation of decisions on urgent items | Chair |

Adjourn as Necessary to Action Urgent Issues

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 4. Situational briefing (including any clarifications or recent updates from Chief of Staff/
Information Manager/Attendees by exception only | |
| 5. Review and agree strategy and priorities | Chair |
| 6. Review outstanding actions and their effect | Chair |
| i. Determine new strategic actions required | |
| ii. Allocate responsibility for agreed actions | |
| 7. Confirm date and time of next meeting (alongside an established meeting rhythm) | Chair |

Post Meeting: Distribute record of decisions, ensure decision log is updated & complete

Sec/Chair

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