Incident information

- Identify the location of the fire, materials involved and any potential for flashover or backdraught
- Consider the stability, construction type, size, age and maintained condition of the building
- Identify number and last known position (LKP) of any occupants in need of rescue or assistance to evacuate
- Ascertained the availability of pre-arranged evacuation strategies and policies
- Consider using thermal imaging equipment for scanning when carrying out a scene survey
- Check building system indicator, slave control, alarm panels and CCTV to assess the status of facilities
- Identify utilities, including renewable energy supplies and locate isolation points
- Identify security features that may compromise safe access to and egress from the scene of operations
- Identify the presence and effectiveness of fixed installations and where appropriate, take control of their operation
- Identify any fire engineered solution and assess effectiveness against intended purpose
- All incident information:
  - Gather information from available sources to gain accurate situational awareness and understanding
  - Question the responsible person, other responders and witnesses to understand incident factors and history
  - Confirm and communicate the involvement, number and severity of any casualties (persons or animals)
  - Ensure that a scene survey is carried out at the earliest opportunity
  - Access any operational or site specific risk information (SSRI) and confirm accuracy
  - Debrief crews that have withdrawn from a working area during an incident to gain operational intelligence
  - Maintain situational awareness and identify changes during the incident through active
monitoring and regular briefings

- **Further incident information**

  - Access any operational or site specific risk information (SSRI) and confirm accuracy
  - Access premises information box or signage relating to building features
  - Use any available plans of the building to inform tactical decision making
  - Question the responsible person, other responders and witnesses to understand incident factors and history
  - Request information from Fire Control on any fire survival guidance being given
  - Consider the occupancy, use and contents of the property involved
  - Consider the presence of unofficial occupants (e.g. squatters, rough sleepers, drug users, youths)
  - Consider potential causes of fire e.g. deliberate or accidental ignition and illegal activities
  - Assess the status of compartmentation, fire doors, means of escape and protected shafts
  - Consider the original use of the building and any subsequent structural or cosmetic alterations
  - Identify the location of basements, chimneys, voids, ducting, cavities and concealed areas
  - Identify the presence of any active heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems
  - Continually monitor and assess the fire development for signs and symptoms of escalation
  - Ensure regular scene surveys of the building are carried out based on a risk assessment of the incident
  - Access past, present and future weather information from sources such as the Met Office
All incident information:

- Use local knowledge, topography and map reading skills to aid navigation to an incident
- Ensure that tracks and pathways are suitable for fire service vehicles
- Consider the least damaging routes to incidents and where possible, stay on marked paths and tracks
- Consider Step 1-2-3 Plus: Safety Triggers for Emergency Personnel
- Access past, present and future weather information from sources such as the Met Office
- Ascertain the availability of pre-arranged evacuation strategies and policies
- Consider pollution prevention information contained within site specific risk plans
- Seek advice from landowners and other bodies on susceptible areas of the environment
- Review situational awareness following an emergency evacuation or tactical withdrawal

**Resource information**

- Consider requesting aerial or special appliances to reduce risk and demand on resources
- Secure sufficient firefighting media to enable the fire to be fully extinguished
- Consider resources that may be available from neighbouring fire and rescue services and partner agencies
- Consider the deployment of oncoming resources when positioning personnel and vehicles
- All incident information:
  - Request sufficient resources to implement initial actions, the incident plan and support contingency plan
- Consider requesting the attendance of a competent person, subject matter expert or tactical adviser
• Consider resources that may be available from neighbouring fire and rescue services and partner agencies

• Inform and/or seek advice from environment agencies and/or sewage undertakers where necessary

• Consider whether appliances, personnel, equipment and other resources can be released from the incident

• Regularly update fire control on the availability status of appliances and other resources

• **Further resource information**

  - Request sufficient resources to implement initial actions, the incident plan and support contingency plan

  - Identify best access route, rendezvous point (RVP) and marshalling area and communicate to all responders

  - Request medical support for any casualties and safety of incident responders if required

  - Identify a secondary water supply in case of increased demand or failure

  - Consider the use of wet/dry risers, fire mains or booster pumps to supply water to the scene of operations

  - Request support for people affected by the incident, from the local authority, partner agencies or police family liaison officers

  - Consider requesting advice on structural integrity from local authority building control teams or USAR Tac Ad

  - Request utilities representative where isolation is required or illegal extraction evident

  - All incident information:

    - Identify best access route, rendezvous point (RVP) and marshalling area and communicate to all responders

    - Consider requesting facilities for the welfare of crews deployed at protracted incidents

    - Consider the availability of pollution control equipment and/or pollution containment facilities on site

    - Make use of specialist fire and rescue service or on-site environmental protection
Consider the appointment of a HMA (or equivalent) to oversee environmental protection activities

**Risk information**

- **People**
  - Determine whether people should be advised to evacuate, shelter in place or 'stay put'
  - Identify the most appropriate evacuation plan and record rationale for decision
  - Consider occupants that need assistance to evacuate (e.g. disabilities, medical needs, refuge areas)
  - Review the use and effectiveness of evacuation, shelter in place or 'stay put' plans throughout the incident, to ensure they remain valid
  - Consider the effect of firefighting tactics and the flow path of smoke on evacuation routes
  - Implement a co-ordination process for fire survival guidance being given by fire control

- **Violence and aggression**
  - Consider adopting defensive tactics if people are displaying unpredictable, aggressive, violent or illegal behaviour
  - Request police support at incidents involving violence and aggression towards crews
  - Consider deploying the minimum amount of equipment during public disorder
  - Ensure operational activities allow for rapid withdrawal of personnel, vehicles and equipment during public disorder
  - Ensure personnel avoid confrontation if there is a risk of violence or aggression

- **Restricted access and egress**
  - Ensure access and egress routes are protected and not compromised by firefighting
activity

- Select the safest and simplest method of gaining entry
- Be aware of security systems and devices which could potentially isolate personnel in hazard areas
- Consider designating separate routes for access, egress and emergency evacuation
- Consider using tactical ventilation to improve conditions and maintain access and egress routes

• Fire and thermal radiation

- Position vehicles anticipating fire development, thermal radiation, collapse, smoke and other hazards
- Use the appropriate extinguishing method, media, techniques and equipment
- Put in place covering and/or safety jets according to identified risks
- Ensure that Firefighting PPE is worn in accordance with service risk assessment, procedures and training

• Smoke and fire gases

- Consider the effects of wind and ventilation on smoke and fire gases when positioning firefighting personnel
- Consider using tactical ventilation to improve conditions and maintain access and egress routes
- Ensure that all personnel wear the type of RPE identified by service risk assessments, procedures and training
- Implement BA entry control procedures appropriate to the level of risk identified
- Consider the impact of smoke plume on downwind life risk, road users and other transport networks
• **Flashover, backdraught and fire gas ignition**
  
  ◦ Where backdraught conditions are suspected, apply media and ventilate before interior deployment
  
  ◦ Where flashover conditions are suspected, consider direct firefighting techniques
  
  ◦ Consider employing a combination of direct firefighting and gas cooling to control conditions
  
  ◦ Consider the isolation or containment of the fire compartment
  
  ◦ Brief crews to carry out self-protection, door entry and compartment firefighting techniques

• **Uncontrolled ventilation**
  
  ◦ Monitor the effect of wind and ventilation on the fire development, smoke and fire gases
  
  ◦ Consider the flow path of smoke and fire gases and the potential for fire spread
  
  ◦ Put covering jets in place prior to the creation of exhaust vents, where possible
  
  ◦ Consider leaving unopened doors closed to prevent the unnecessary spread of smoke and fire gas

• **Fire spread**
  
  ◦ Consider indications of hidden firespread, including smoke or activation of fire detection
  
  ◦ Consider whether a breach of the compartment would spread fire to another room, floor, area or building
  
  ◦ Check areas above, below and adjacent to the fire compartment for potential fire spread
  
  ◦ Put safety jets in place to protect firefighting teams and maintain safe access and egress
  
  ◦ Assess the status of compartmentation, fire doors, means of escape and protected shafts
  
  ◦ Consider the impact of access routes, firefighting lines and actions on compartmentation
• Provide early protection of external boundaries to prevent firespread, flame extension and thermal radiation

• Consider the impact that failure or change in operations of fixed installations might have on fire spread

**Unstable structure**

• Consider the effects of the fire’s duration and intensity and firefighting activity on structural elements or structural frames

• Consider the effects of the fire’s duration and intensity and firefighting activity on structural materials

• Assess and continuously monitor the buildings for signs of failing structural integrity, external and internal

• Evaluate and monitor the potential footprint of collapse and debris

• Consider requesting advice on structural integrity from local authority building control teams or USAR Tac Ad

• Consider the effects of fire or firefighting on mezzanine and raised storage systems

• Consider the structural stability of the building before deploying personnel for internal firefighting

**Live utilities**

• Isolate utilities that may impact fire development and secure against reconnection

• Consider isolation of electricity supply to mitigate the risk of electrocution

• Identify any sources of renewable energy generation such as photovoltaic panels or wind power

• Ensure that PPE is worn in accordance with service risk assessment for live utilities

**Cables**

• Identify and communicate the presence of lightweight conduit, trunking and cable fixings
Identify loose cables and consider using alternative access and egress routes or defensive tactics

Ensure that cable cutting equipment is available at incidents where cables may cause entanglement

Consider securing or carrying out a controlled release of cables

**Hazardous materials**

When approaching the incident use visual and other incident indicators to inform situational awareness

Consider potential causes of fire e.g. deliberate or accidental ignition and illegal activities

Gather incident information from a suitable safe distance based on hazard assessment

Identify the presence of asbestos-containing materials and assess the level of risk (High or Lower Hazard)

Use signs, labels, markings, container types and detection equipment to identify pressurised gas

Use signs, labels, markings and container types to identify the presence of biological agents

Identify whether the incident should be reclassified as a hazardous materials response

**Preventable damage**

Use the minimum extinguishing media required considering the appropriate weight of attack

Close doors to prevent smoke and fire gas travel whilst maintaining access, egress and ventilation

Move valuable items to an appropriate place of safety in liaison with the responsible person

Consider protecting fragile objects from falling debris
Consider completing an inventory of all items removed to a safe location

Consider available salvage plans for heritage properties

All incident information:

• Working environment

  † Identify bodies of water, unstable ground and risks of falling from height in working environment

  † Consider the effect of weather conditions and time of day on the working environment

  † Ensure that all personnel are briefed on the current hazards, risks, control measures and tactical mode

  † Establish and maintain safe means of access to and egress from scene of operations at all times

  † Establish, identify and communicate safe traffic routes, establish clear zones and equipment points

  † Provide lighting to illuminate hazards to personnel in poorly lit environments

  † Ensure that all personnel wear the level of PPE identified by service risk assessments, procedures and training

• Weather conditions

  † Monitor personnel for signs and symptoms of fatigue, dehydration, heat or cold stress

  † Consider task rotation when personnel are carrying out manual handling tasks

  † Consider relief and welfare arrangements to reduce the effects of stress and fatigue on themselves and others

  † Instigate appropriate medical interventions if personnel show signs and symptoms of physiological stress

• Noise
- Consider isolating sources of noise

- Keep the number of people exposed to the hazard at a minimum and reduce time of exposure through personnel rotation

- Ensure personnel wear appropriate hearing protectors

**• Heavy and bulky objects**

- Consider using machinery or other equipment to assist with manual handling risk

- Request additional or specialist resources to assist with manual handling tasks

- Consider the task, individual capabilities, load and environment (TILE) when carrying out risk assessments for manual handling

- Ensure personnel adopt the provided safe system of manual handling

**• Moving vehicles**

- Be vigilant and co-operate with service procedures relating to vehicle movements

- Position appliances to fend-off vehicles and use warning signs, lights and cones

- Consider taking steps to minimise the risk of collisions

**• Animals**

- Avoid, contain or control animals if necessary

- Request support with managing animals from owners, keepers, police, vets or welfare organisations

**• Hazardous materials**

- Identify whether the incident should be reclassified as a hazardous materials response

- Remove unaffected chemicals from the hazard area if safe to do so

- Comply with service protocols when handling substances that are hazardous to health
Ensure open wounds, cuts and grazes are covered by a waterproof dressing
Comply with hygiene arrangements and do not eat, drink, smoke or vape

**Body fluids**
- Avoid contact with body fluids where possible
- Isolate or cover body fluids following casualty removal
- Wear body fluid gloves and cover broken skin with waterproof dressing
- Instigate decontamination procedures following exposure of personnel and equipment to body fluids

**Distressing or traumatic scenes**
- Minimise number of personnel exposed to traumatic scenes where possible
- Handover responsibility for traumatic incidents to an appropriate agency where the fire service does not have primacy
- Erect screens to restrict the view of traumatic scenes

**Violence and aggression**
- Consider adopting defensive tactics if people are displaying unpredictable, aggressive, violent or illegal behaviour
- Request police support at incidents involving violence and aggression towards crews

**Powers, policies and procedures**
- Enter premises or a place, by force if necessary, without the consent of the owner or occupier of the premises:
  - if they reasonably believe an emergency to have occurred
  - if they reasonably believe a fire to have broken out or to be about to break out
  - for the purpose of extinguishing or preventing the fire or protecting life or property
  - **NB** Does not apply to Crown property (including ministry of defence) and diplomatic or consular premises
  - **NB** The Master of the ship (or delegated officer) of a merchant vessel must give permission to board
- All incident information:
- Consider the legal exemptions in relation to environmental protection i.e.
A discharge is made in an emergency to avoid danger to human health
All reasonably practicable steps were taken to minimise pollution
The relevant environment agency is informed of the incident as soon as possible

- Enter premises or a place, by force if necessary, without the consent of the owner or occupier of the premises:
  - if they reasonably believe an emergency to have occurred
  - if they reasonably believe a fire to have broken out or to be about to break out
  - for the purpose of extinguishing or preventing the fire or protecting life or property
- NB Does not apply to Crown property (including ministry of defence) and diplomatic or consular premises
- NB The Master of the ship (or delegated officer) of a merchant vessel must give permission to board

- Restrict the access of persons to premises or a place if they reasonably believe an emergency to have occurred

- **Further powers, policies and procedures**

  - Request a water undertaker to provide a supply and pressure of water greater than otherwise available

  - Enter into an agreement to secure the use of water under the control of a person

  - All incident information:
    - Close a highway, stop and regulate traffic:
      - if a road traffic accident has occurred
      - for the purpose of rescuing people or protecting them from serious harm
      - if they reasonably believe a fire to have broken out or to be about to break out
      - for the purpose of extinguishing or preventing the fire or protecting life or property

  - Consider applying operational discretion where outcomes would justify unusual, unorthodox or innovative action

  - Outcomes which would justify applying operational discretion include:
    - Saving human life
    - Taking decisive action to prevent an incident escalating
    - Incidents where taking no action may lead others to put themselves in danger

  - Return to operational procedures when the objective has been achieved

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<th>Expectations?</th>
<th>Benefit vs Risk?</th>
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Objectives

- Maintain the safety of all personnel, other responders and the public
- Save life and reduce harm
- Extinguish the fire and eliminate all ignition sources
- All incident information:
  - Maintain the safety of all personnel, other responders and the public
  - Save life and reduce harm
- Minimise the impact of the incident and fire service actions on any identified environmental risk
- Promote community recovery and restore normal operations

Further objectives

- Promote community recovery and restore normal operations
- Minimise the impact of the incident and fire service actions on any identified environmental risk
- All incident information:
  - Consider the JESIP principles at all incidents involving multi-agency operations
  - Consider taking action to prevent a serious escalation of the incident
  - Protect Critical National Infrastructure and/or local critical infrastructure

Tactical priorities

- Carry out any rescues or lifesaving actions
- Consider taking action to prevent a serious escalation of the incident
- Develop and communicate a firefighting plan and ventilation strategy to all personnel
• Implement a co-ordinated search plan, define parameters and sub-divide the area where necessary

• Consider the need for damage control and salvage operations

• All incident information:

• Carry out a dynamic risk assessment, identify hazards, evaluate risk and implement safe systems of work

• Declare the tactical mode and communicate to all personnel and fire control

• Instigate the completion of an analytical risk assessment and record significant findings

• Establish emergency arrangements appropriate to the size and complexity of the incident

• Further tactical priorities

  ○ Identify the number of casualties requiring medical attention and instigate a triage process

  ○ Consider appointing a search coordinator to ensure all areas have been systematically searched

  ○ Develop and communicate an incident plan considering contingencies arrangements

  ○ Identify all possible ignition sources and eliminate them as far as is possible

  ○ Establish appropriate emergency arrangements for releasing personnel from cable entanglement

  ○ Ensure that good scene preservation and practices are adopted at all stages of an incident

  ○ Consider moving physical evidence to a safe place, away from the effects of the fire or firefighting

  ○ All incident information:

  ○ Apply the firefighter safety maxim and safe person principles at operational incidents
○ Identify and communicate the hazard area and establish a safe working area as soon as is practicable

○ Anticipate the likely development of the incident and evaluate the potential consequences of a range of actions

○ Develop and communicate an incident plan considering contingencies arrangements

○ Consider the competence of individuals and teams when allocating tasks

○ Regularly review and update incident plan in response to active monitoring of the situation against expected outcomes

○ Review the tactical mode following active monitoring and briefings with sector commanders

○ Periodically review the analytical risk assessment using situational awareness from active monitoring

○ Use the Joint Decision Model to co-ordinate an effective response at multi-agency incidents

○ Identify the need to evacuate and develop a strategy in liaison with partner agencies

○ Communicate emergency evacuation signal and muster point arrangements to all personnel

○ Secure the scene to ensure evidence is preserved for internal and external investigations

○ Carry out an environmental risk assessment and monitor the impact of tactics on the identified risk

**Operational tactics**

- Consider the appropriate speed of intervention to limit fire development
- Select an appropriate firefighting method (i.e. cooling, smothering, starving, interrupting)
• Select appropriate firefighting media (e.g. water, foam, dry powder, CO₂)

• Select an appropriate firefighting technique (e.g. direct firefighting, firebreaks, controlled burn)

• Select appropriate firefighting equipment (e.g. extinguisher, hose reel, main jet, cutting extinguisher)

• Deploy an appropriately sized team to ensure the safe transportation of casualties

• Consider adjoining areas when mitigating damage due to fire, smoke and extinguishing media

• All incident information:

• Gain access to premises causing minimal damage considering the urgency of the situation

• Establish and resource a casualty care point

• Determine whether people should be advised to evacuate, shelter in place or 'stay put'

• When evacuation is necessary, identify the number of people affected and develop a plan

**Further operational tactics**

○ Monitor the effect of the media on the fire to ensure that the anticipated outcome is achieved

○ Consider the use of monitors (aerial appliance mounted, fixed or portable)

○ Consider compartment boundary cooling using appropriate and effective fire-fighting media

○ Consider creating a firebreak to prevent firespread, considering the time required to implement

○ Consider means of access to concealed areas, including use of hatches and cutting away

○ All incident information:

○ Consider the potential effects of incident development when positioning appliances

○ Identify the number of casualties requiring medical attention and instigate a triage process

○ Instigate and communicate hygiene arrangements, facilities and
consider decontamination

- Implement an appropriate protection plan when an identified nature conservation site is at risk

**Communication**

- Ensure that crews are briefed on all firefighting activities and provide regular updates on progress
- Establish communications to coordinate internal and external firefighting operations
- Conduct regular communication checks to ensure equipment continues to function
- Inform all personnel and other responders which utilities have been isolated and if any remain operative
- Carry out timely liaison with partner agencies on the establishment of reception centres
- All incident information:
  - Establish and maintain an incident ground communication plan considering other agencies and remote resources
  - Ensure that all personnel are briefed on the current hazards, risks, control measures and tactical mode
  - Communicate the incident situation to other responders via fire control using the M\ETHANE message protocol
  - Provide a structured brief when handing over and taking over command
  - Communicate findings of analytical risk assessment to all personnel and other agencies

**Further Communication**

- Implement fallback procedures should there be a failure in the communications equipment
- Ensure all personnel are informed of any intended tactics regarding the fixed
installation systems

- Use the most effective methods for communicating with people who are either directly or indirectly involved in the incident

- Inform all personnel of known or likely areas of interest for fire or criminal investigation

- All incident information:
  - Identify best access route, rendezvous point (RVP) and marshalling area and communicate to all responders
  - Communicate any change in the tactical mode of a sector of the incident to all personnel
  - Communicate objectives, priorities and tactics to be adopted in resolving the incident
  - Deliver clear, concise and timely briefings to crews, command support functions and other agencies
  - Ensure all personnel are aware of the incident command structure and communication strategy
  - Establish a media liaison point and brief a nominated media liaison officer
  - Use plain English to communicate information where a lack of common understanding exists
  - Regularly pass information to fire control regarding incident progress
  - Communicate emergency evacuation signal and muster point arrangements to all personnel

- Ensure that all appropriate environmental agencies are informed of the incident when required

- Use the most effective methods for communicating with people who are either directly or indirectly involved in the incident

**Control**

- Consider taking control of fixed communications systems
• Evaluate and monitor the potential footprint of collapse and debris

• Consider positioning safety officers externally to observe fire development, smoke and falling debris

• Position vehicles anticipating fire development, thermal radiation, collapse, smoke and other hazards

• Consider establishing a search sector to co-ordinate fire survival guidance and prioritise response

• All incident information:

  • Establish an incident command structure appropriate to the likely size and complexity of the incident

  • Ensure that appropriate inner and outer cordons are established, identified and communicated following an assessment of risk to crews, other agencies and the public

  • Control access to the inner cordon using methods proportionate to the size and complexity of the incident

  • Appoint competent safety officers to monitor specific hazards or activities

  • Instigate a tactical withdrawal of personnel when the mode changes from offensive to defensive

• Further control

  • Record and time stamp the decision to isolate utilities in the analytical risk assessment and decision log

  • Note issues relating to cordons or physical evidence in the decision log

  • All incident information:

    • Be prepared to adopt a leadership role at multi-agency incidents

    • Establish a scene access control point to log all persons operating within the inner cordon when appropriate

    • Consider the use of command support systems and equipment where required

    • Monitor the performance of personnel and where necessary modify plans to available competencies

    • Keep contemporaneous records and/or decision logs to capture key events, critical decisions and rationale
Instigate a safety sector at large or complex incidents under the control of a safety sector commander

Implement exclusion zones where intolerable risks to safety are identified

Request the police to establish a traffic cordon where necessary

Request an air exclusion zone through the appropriate authority if required

Maintain effective command and control in an emergency situation and review incident priorities, tactics and resources

Carry out a roll call of fire service and all other personnel at the scene following an emergency evacuation

**Incident closure and handover**

- Identify the area of origin and investigate possible causes of the fire considering criminal acts
- Hand over responsibility for removed items and security of premises to the responsible person or the police
- All incident information:
  - Hand over responsibility for removed items and security of premises to the responsible person or the police
- Carry out fire investigations at a level appropriate to the scale of the incident
- Identify the area of origin and investigate possible causes of the fire considering criminal acts
- Monitor and review the potential impact on public health with the assistance of the public health agency

**Further incident closure and handover**

- Secure the scene to ensure evidence is preserved for internal and external investigations
- Record statements from relevant people as soon as practicable to assist in the
Delegate collection of physical evidence to a police crime scene investigator or fire service investigator

Notify police or fire investigators if crews have recently attended other relevant incidents

Access and secure CCTV footage for subsequent investigations and debriefs

Liaise with the police and local authority support teams at incidents involving serious injury and fatalities

Review the effectiveness of active, passive and fire engineered protection before handing over the incident

Document any failure of fire safety measures and communicate to relevant department

All incident information:

**Firefighter Safety Maxim**

"At every incident, the greater the potential benefit of fire and rescue actions, the greater the risk that is accepted by commanders and firefighters. Activities that present a high risk to safety are limited to those that have the potential to save life or to prevent rapid and significant escalation of the incident."

Decision Control Process
Joint Decision Model

Additional information