

Unit 14: Responding to Emergency Service Incidents

Unit code:	J/600/6041
QCF Level 3:	BTEC National
Credit value:	10
Guided learning hours:	60

● Aim and purpose

The aim of this unit is to give learners an awareness and understanding of the roles and responsibilities undertaken by emergency services when responding to emergency incidents. They will also be given the opportunity to develop knowledge of how the public services respond to incidents, and why they must pay attention to health and safety. Scene preservation and specialist units will also be investigated in this unit.

● Unit information

Many public services deal with emergency incidents regularly as part of their role. This unit will look at the role of the fire service, the police, the ambulance service and other statutory and non-statutory services in dealing with these incidents.

This unit will cover the initial phases of emergency response. Learners will investigate how the staff in public service call-handling centres or control rooms deal with emergency situations. Learners will review how incidents are classified and processed. Emergency incidents are numerous and difficult to categorise. Examples of incidents include a threat to life or serious injury to a person, a crime in progress and the offender is still in the vicinity, or a traffic collision involving an injury.

An emergency incident will also require the public services to attend as soon as possible which usually warrants the use of flashing emergency blue lights. However, there may be occasions when a public service responding to an emergency has to adopt a silent approach. Learners will examine the necessary driving standards when driving an emergency response vehicle. Learners will review the current policies and procedures for emergency response driving for a selected public service. There will be an opportunity to investigate driver training and evaluate the impact of the Highway Code. Learners will also review media coverage of high profile cases where the response driver has been held accountable for their actions, for example police pursuits.

As the unit progresses learners will review the actions to be taken on arrival at the scene of an emergency incident. Learners will investigate the roles and responsibilities of the key emergency services, in particular the fire service. The analysis will include a review of the methodology used to collect and collate information from the scene. Learners will ascertain how information gathering assists other attending agencies and enables the identification of a specialist service or equipment. Learners will look at the roles of crime scene investigation, accident investigation and fire investigation as well as the role of the Health and Safety Executive in relation to accidents in the workplace.

In conclusion, learners will develop a basic knowledge of health and safety issues, for example the measures to be taken to protect self, colleagues, witnesses and injured persons from possible danger. Learners will investigate aspects of scene preservation and review the procedures for placing cordons and the possible need for evacuation. They will then be given the opportunity to apply this knowledge to a scenario, where they will need to demonstrate the ability to review the actions of the public services in responding to an emergency incident, and in particular the health and safety considerations to be taken.

● Learning outcomes

On completion of this unit a learner should:

- 1 Know the importance of responding to emergency incidents safely in response vehicles
- 2 Understand the roles and responsibilities of public services when attending the scene of an emergency response incident
- 3 Understand the necessity for scene preservation at emergency incidents
- 4 Be able to review health and safety considerations during an emergency response incident scenario.

Unit content

1 Know the importance of responding to emergency incidents safely in response vehicles

Emergency incident: definition examples of emergency incidents as described in the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 including threat to human welfare, threat to the environment and threat to security

Incident grading: how incidents are graded by emergency services; inter-agency approaches/agreements; role of call centres and incident managers; policies and procedures for dealing with incidents; definitions of emergency response; response times; initial response services; additional public services offering specialist knowledge eg bomb disposal, underwater search; accountability

Driving in response to an emergency: emergency vehicles and equipment; driver training and driving standards for emergency response vehicles; public perception and reaction to emergency response vehicles eg other road users' behaviour; emergency service driver accountability eg bad driving causes accidents and deaths, media coverage when mistakes are made, use of warning systems including sirens and lights; impact of the Highway Code on response drivers

2 Understand the roles and responsibilities of public services when attending the scene of an emergency response incident

Initial actions of first in attendance: information update (casualties, hazards, access, location, emergency services required, type of incidents (CHALET))

Practical public service work: including police investigations, use of scene of crime officers, scene preservation, crowd control, ambulance, Navy, Army, RAF fire services assisting in civil emergencies; mountain and cave rescue involvement in search and rescue

Fire service work: including dealing with accidents, fighting fires, fire investigation units, rescues, road traffic collisions, firefighting and rescue equipment

Roles of statutory and voluntary agencies: eg highways departments to assist with road closures, local radio to advise of traffic problems or evacuations, bomb disposal to investigate suspicious packages

Voluntary agencies: other agencies that can offer assistance in the event of an emergency incident eg St John Ambulance (first aid), British Red Cross (first aid), Victim Support (welfare and emotional support), Women's Royal Voluntary Service (assists with welfare, provision of food and shelter)

3 Understand the necessity for scene preservation at emergency incidents

Scene preservation for scene investigation: need for accident investigation eg serious and fatal road traffic collisions; need for fire investigation eg malicious and suspicious ignitions; role of Health and Safety Executive eg accidents in the workplace; British Transport Police eg accidents on the railways, trains and the underground network; security for scene preservation; use of cordons

Scene preservation for evidence collection: need for scene preservation eg to establish cause, to identify damage, to gather information to prevent further incidents; crime scene investigation eg use of photographs, video, forensics, witness testimony

4 Be able to review health and safety considerations during an emergency response incident scenario

Self-preservation: specialist clothing eg high visibility clothing, footwear, eye protection, head protection, gloves

Scene safety measures: warning signs, barriers, cones; road closures and diversions

Consideration for public welfare: eg use of the media to warn the public, warning the public about possible delays to public transport, warning the public about congestion; ensuring scene is safe and will not affect the local environment and its citizens

Dangers at the scene: chemical spillage eg hazardous chemicals (HazChem warning system); electrical cables; railways and railway crossings; fires eg persons trapped, smoke inhalation, evacuation; bombs and explosive devices eg bomb warnings, targets, terrorist activity, searching, evacuation

Legislation and regulations: impact of legislation and regulations; Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, including any subsequent amendments of legislation, the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR), the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH); Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCPs)

Assessment and grading criteria

In order to pass this unit, the evidence that the learner presents for assessment needs to demonstrate that they can meet all the learning outcomes for the unit. The assessment criteria for a pass grade describe the level of achievement required to pass this unit.

Assessment and grading criteria		
To achieve a pass grade the evidence must show that the learner is able to:	To achieve a merit grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass criteria, the learner is able to:	To achieve a distinction grade the evidence must show that, in addition to the pass and merit criteria, the learner is able to:
P1 describe how emergency incidents are graded by a selected public service call centre		
P2 describe the importance of responding safely to emergency incidents as an emergency response driver		
P3 identify the statutory and voluntary agencies who may work together at the scene of an emergency incident	M1 assess the roles and responsibilities of the key services attending an emergency incident	D1 evaluate the inter-agency cooperation of the emergency response services
P4 explain the roles and responsibilities of the public services when attending at the scene of an emergency incident [IE2]		
P5 describe the necessity for scene preservation units at emergency incidents as part of an incident investigation	M2 explain how scene preservation contributes to an accident/incident investigation	
P6 assess the health and safety measures to be taken to ensure personal safety and that of others when attending an emergency incident scenario, with reference to the relevant health and safety legislation. [RL6]	M3 review the need for measures to be taken to ensure personal safety and that of others when attending an emergency incident scenario, with reference to relevant health and safety legislation.	D2 evaluate the impact of health and safety measures on services responding to an emergency incident scenario with reference to relevant health and safety legislation.

PLTS: This summary references where applicable, in the square brackets, the elements of the personal, learning and thinking skills applicable in the pass criteria. It identifies opportunities for learners to demonstrate effective application of the referenced elements of the skills.

Key	IE – independent enquirers	RL – reflective learners	SM – self-managers
	CT – creative thinkers	TW – team workers	EP – effective participators

Essential guidance for tutors

Delivery

This is an informative but practical unit, which will most likely require considerable input from the main emergency services (police, fire service and ambulance service). There will be the opportunity for visits to the headquarters of each of the main public services. These could be used to generate evidence, as could work placements in the appropriate settings. Advantage should be taken of high-profile incidents involving media coverage and cases where the emergency response driver has been held accountable for their actions. Footage from current television series or 'fly on the wall' documentaries will provide good material for group discussion.

A practical approach to learning should be adopted whenever possible with criteria being integrated. It is recommended that a theoretical input is followed by example(s) of the theory in practice. This could be achieved through role play: a useful tactic could be to set up the mock scene of a road traffic accident, a fire or major crime scene allocating roles of various emergency services to learners who must then deal with the incident. Learners may have had personal experiences of these incidents, which may be distressing and therefore must be handled in a sensitive manner.

It is advised that visits to, and from, a variety of agencies are arranged, for example:

- the police communication and control room
- the fire service communication and control room
- fire service training
- the ambulance service communication and control room
- forensic science laboratory.

Visiting speakers from:

- driver training – police, fire and ambulance
- motorway police
- Highways Agency
- police armed response units
- police instant response units
- British Transport Police
- Ministry of Defence Police (MoD)
- explosive ordnance disposal – army regiment
- accident investigation
- fire investigation
- crime scene investigation
- contingency planning office of local authority, police, fire and ambulance
- Health and Safety Executive
- Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (ROSPA)

- St John Ambulance/Red Cross
- Women's Royal Voluntary Service (WRVS).

Library resources should include law books and newspaper reviews of emergency incidents.

Outline learning plan

The outline learning plan has been included in this unit as guidance and can be used in conjunction with the programme of suggested assignments.

The outline learning plan demonstrates one way in planning the delivery and assessment of this unit.

Topic and suggested assignments/activities and/assessment
Unit introduction and assessment methodology is explained.
Teaching activity – how emergency incidents are defined and graded.
Case study analysis – reviewing actual cases and attempting to grade these.
Teaching activity – selecting appropriate responses to incidents, including the vehicles, equipment and personnel used.
Learner-led seminars introducing incidents and how they were responded to.
Assignment 1: Emergency Incidents, Incident Grading and Responding to Incidents (P1, P2)
Review of assignment 1 including tutor feedback and reworking.
Teaching activity – roles and responsibilities of public services.
Visiting speakers from public service response units including police, fire service and ambulance service.
Teaching activity – initial actions of first in attendance.
Case study analysis of actual emergency response incidents.
Assignment 2: Roles and Responsibilities of Public Services Attending an Incident (P3, P4, M1, D1)
Review of assignment 2 including teaching activity and reworking.
Teaching activity – need for scene preservation at an incident.
Role play using methods of evidence collection at an incident.
Assignment 3: Scene Preservation (P5, M2)
Review of assignment 3 including teaching activity and reworking.
Teaching activity – methods used to ensure health and safety.
Learner research activity into methods used to ensure the safety of public service personnel and members of the public at an emergency response incident.
Assignment 4: Health and Safety Review (P6, M3, D2)
Review of assignment 4 including teaching activity and reworking.
Unit evaluation and review.

Assessment

A number of assessment activities can be used to meet the grading criteria of this unit. Contact with the public services involved in emergency response incidents may help with the collection of practical information and possible case studies for learner analysis.

Practical investigations into emergency incidents and the way the public services are involved at these incidents would be a useful exercise to support evidence development. The findings may be in the form of written reports or presentations concluding with effective evaluations and summaries. Evidence may also be gained from witness testimony and observation. Learners could also devise a questionnaire, which can be used as part of an investigatory interview with members of the public services.

To demonstrate the practical aspects of this unit, role-play techniques could be incorporated into the assessment. Learners could be given a scenario which they have to manage, such as a crime scene, a road traffic accident, or an incident involving numerous casualties. It may be advisable to seek assistance from the emergency services to gain a basic knowledge of the course of action to be taken in each set of circumstances.

A number of assignments could be set by the tutor which cover all the grading criteria. A case study would be a useful assessment tool if this approach is taken.

For P1, learners must describe how emergency incidents are graded for a selected public service control room, including the grading categories used and the role of call handlers and incident managers.

For P2, learners need to demonstrate their understanding of the standards and accountability of emergency response drivers, for example what a competent and careful driver is – there are no exemptions for drivers of emergency vehicles. Learners need to describe the importance of responding safely to emergency incidents as an emergency driver.

For P3, learners must provide examples of both the statutory and voluntary agencies who would work together at an incident.

For P4, learners should explain the roles and responsibilities of the services at the scene including the roles and responsibilities of the first service on the scene, for example ensuring public safety, clearing access and exit routes, directing traffic, information update for other services and the public.

For M1, learners need to assess the roles and responsibilities of those attending the emergency incident beyond the initial stages. To achieve this, learners should consider the information given for P3 and P4, and make a judgement as to the appropriateness of these roles and responsibilities in dealing with the emergency incident.

D1 is an extension of M1. It requires learners to evaluate the inter-agency cooperation of the emergency response services, using examples from specific incidents on how they have worked together. A case study of a recent emergency incident may be used by the learner to research information for D1, for example London bombings in July 2005, tornados in Birmingham or London, Buncefield fire. Information could be gained from the internet and other media sources to support the learner's evaluation.

For P5, a range of information should be provided to learners, such as accident investigations, fire investigations and information from the Health and Safety Executive.

If a case study is used, then the learners could relate their responses to examples from the case study set.

M2 is an extension of P5. Learners should explain how scene preservation and the service provision of specialist units, such as the Health and Safety Executive, contribute to the accident/incident investigation.

For P6, the learner must assess personal safety measures, and those for others, at an incident, for example wearing high visibility clothing and protective footwear. This will need to relate to the relevant health and safety requirements, such as those covered by legislation.

For M3, the learner should provide an review of why it is important to ensure personal safety and that of others when attending emergency service incident. Learners should relate responses to relevant legislation where appropriate.

To achieve D2, the learner must demonstrate an understanding of the key legislation and regulations and evaluate how they impact on workers attending emergency incidents. A detailed knowledge of the legislation and regulations is not required.

Programme of suggested assignments

The following table shows a programme of suggested assignments that cover the pass, merit and distinction criteria in the grading grid. This is for guidance and it is recommended that centres either write their own assignments or adapt any Edexcel assignments to meet local needs and resources.

Criteria covered	Assignment title	Scenario	Assessment method
P1, P2	Emergency Incidents, Incident Grading and Responding to Incidents	As a new recruit working in a public service you have been asked to investigate its response to emergency service incidents.	Presentation.
P3, P4, M1, D1	Roles and Responsibilities of Public Services Attending an Incident	As part of internal training, you have to investigate the range of services present at an incident.	Written report.
P5, M2	Scene Preservation	As a new recruit you have been sent to the fire investigation department of the local fire service to observe preservation of a crime scene.	Poster.
P6, M3, D2	Health and Safety Review	You are part of a review panel investigating the standards of safety maintained at incidents.	Practical scenario and review of scenario.

Links to National Occupational Standards, other BTEC units, other BTEC qualifications and other relevant units and qualifications

This unit forms part of the BTEC Public Services sector suite. This unit has particular links with the following unit titles in the Public Services suite:

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Public Service Incidents	Security Procedures in Public Services	Planning and Management of Major Incidents
Forensic Detection		Security Procedures in Public Services
Introduction to Security Work in the Public Services		

Essential resources

Learners should have access to library facilities for research purposes. Internet access to governmental and inter-governmental sites is vital. Learners must be made aware that police forces and fire and rescue services have individual websites.

Access to 'fly on the wall' television documentaries showing on-the-street policing may provide good examples of emergency incidents for class discussions.

Indicative reading for learners

Textbooks

Hutton G, McKinnon G and Fraser S – *Blackstone's Police Manual 2010 Volume 4: General Police Duties 2010* (Blackstone's Police Manuals) (Oxford University Press, 2009) ISBN 0199576041/9780199576043

Home Office – *Roadcraft: The Essential Police Driver's Handbook* (The Stationery Office, 2007) ISBN 0117021687/9780117021686

Johnston D and Hutton G – *Blackstone's Police Manual Volume 2: Evidence and Procedure 2010* (Blackstone's Police Manuals) (Oxford University Press, 2009) ISBN 0199576025/9780199576029

Journals

CJS Now

Fire

Paramedic

Police Life

Police Professional

Police Review

The Sharp End

View

Websites

Constabulary Magazine

www.constabulary.org.uk

Emergency Services Press

www.emergencyservicespress.co.uk

Fire service

www.fireservice.co.uk

Health and Safety Executive

www.hse.gov.uk

The Fire Service College, Moreton-in-Marsh

www.fireservicecollege.ac.uk

Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills

The table below identifies the opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) that have been included within the pass assessment criteria of this unit.

Skill	When learners are ...
Independent enquirers	carrying out research on roles and responsibilities of the public services when attending incidents
Reflective learners	using skills and techniques to reflect upon and assess the health and safety measures taken when attending an emergency incident.

● Functional Skills – Level 2

Skill	When learners are ...
ICT – Find and select information	
Select and use a variety of sources of information independently for a complex task	researching the role of the public services in responding to emergency incidents
ICT – Develop, present and communicate information	
Enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text and tables • images • numbers • records 	compiling evidence relating to how incidents are graded, and the importance of responding safely to these incidents
Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience	compiling evidence for assessment
English	
Speaking and listening – make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts	participating in the emergency response scenario assessment
Reading – compare, select, read and understand texts and use them to gather information, ideas, arguments and opinions	analysing case studies of emergency incidents and the relevant public service response
Writing – write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions, effectively and persuasively	producing evidence for assessment.