

Emergency procedures APP available

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We've published guidance to help forces across England and Wales respond to emergencies and major incidents.

News 3 mins read

When a major incident unfolds, such as a terrorist attack, a building fire or a severe weather emergency, the public looks to the police to respond with courage, speed and skill. Our new emergency procedures: initial response and command authorised professional practice (APP) gives everyone in policing the tools and confidence to do exactly that.

The guidance provides:

- official standards
- evidence-based practice
- a clear, structured approach to managing incidents of any type or scale

It supports effective collaboration with other emergency services and partners throughout the whole journey, covering:

- planning and preparedness
- the moment an incident becomes known to police
- the lessons learned once it is over

Officers and staff at every rank can build their skills and confidence in this area through our [emergency procedures online training](#) (you will need to log in to College Learn). This is available to everyone in policing.

Why the guidance has changed

Previously known as the operations APP, this guidance was first published in 2013 and last updated in 2021. Since then, major incidents and the public inquiries that followed have identified areas where police guidance needed strengthening. The APP now reflects recommendations made in those inquiries, including learning from the Manchester Arena attack and the Hillsborough and

Grenfell Tower disasters.

The guidance has been renamed following consultation. Respondents said the previous title did not clearly reflect what the guidance covers, particularly for first responders. Content from the [civil contingencies APP](#) has also been brought into this guidance, reducing repetition and making it easier to use.

What the guidance covers

The APP takes officers and staff through every stage of managing a major or critical incident. It sets out how to establish and run effective command structures at every level. It also includes how to work alongside other emergency services using agreed interoperability principles.

Practical tools within the guidance include METHANE, the standard model for sharing clear, structured incident information. It also covers:

- securing and managing the scene, including cordons, rendezvous points and access control to protect both responders and evidence
- handling casualties
- managing mutual aid
- supporting affected communities through humanitarian assistance

Communications runs throughout the guidance as a core theme. In line with our media and communications APP, it covers:

- radio talkgroups
- multi-agency coordination
- early warning and informing the public
- media handling
- the strategic communications plan that gold commanders lead

The guidance also includes debriefing and post-incident procedures, supporting the ongoing learning that helps policing improve its response to future incidents.

Supporting the wellbeing of officers and staff

Policing can expose officers and staff to stress and trauma and it's common for this to affect mental health. The guidance recognises this, setting out how commanders should support the welfare and wellbeing of those involved during and after major incidents. This includes access to trauma support and the [Mental Health Crisis Line](#) for policing, both provided through Oscar Kilo, the National Police Wellbeing Service.

Who the guidance is for

The APP is relevant to everyone involved in responding to major incidents, including:

- frontline responders
- operational and tactical leaders deciding tactics in the initial stages of an incident
- force incident managers (FIMs)
- strategic (gold), tactical (silver) and operational (bronze) commanders
- chief officers and strategic leaders ensuring their forces have plans, policies and procedures in place
- emergency planning teams developing plans for different types of major incidents

[Go to the emergency procedures APP](#)

Related resources

- [Mental Health Crisis Line: The 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Line is an independent and confidential service for anyone working in policing experiencing a mental health crisis or suicidal thoughts. If you're in crisis, and need help now, call 0300 131 2789](#)
- [Multi-agency gold incident command \(MAGIC\) course – developing strategic leadership capability for major incidents](#)
- [Force incident managers \(FIM\) training programme](#)
- [Media and communications APP](#)

- [Public order public safety APP](#)
- [Armed policing APP](#)
- [National decision model \(NDM\)](#)

Tags

[APP](#) [Critical incidents](#) [Major incidents](#)