

Specialist operational resources

This page is from APP, the official source of professional practice for policing.

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This section provides information on the specialist operational resources and capabilities that could be mobilised during an incident or emergency. Guidance for the provision of infrastructure to support specialist operation resources is provided in the [chief officers](#) section.

For an overview of the capabilities of each of the agencies below, please refer to the Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) document, [Emergency Responder Organisations' Roles and Responsibilities](#).

National interagency liaison officers (NILOs)

National interagency liaison officers (NILOs) are security vetted, trained and identifiable responders from across the emergency services.

They can operate in a command, tactical adviser or service-specific role. They can support pre-planned or spontaneous operations at strategic, tactical and operational levels. This includes facilitating interoperable working with partner agencies. Further details of their responsibilities can be found on the [NILO website](#).

Hazardous area response team (HART)

If the site of the incident or emergency is potentially hazardous or presents challenging conditions for accessing and providing medical care to casualties, the assistance of a hazardous area response team (HART) is required. The ambulance tactical commander should ensure that the HART is contacted and is responsible for providing them with situational awareness, informed by METHANE.

HARTs are comprised of paramedics who have been recruited specifically for the role and provided with specialised, advanced training for responding to a variety of the most challenging emergencies. They work with police and the fire and rescue service, within the inner cordon, to triage and treat casualties. They also provide paramedic support for injured emergency responders.

Urban search and rescue (USAR) teams

If an incident or emergency involves unstable and collapsed structures, the support of urban search and rescue (USAR) teams should be sought. It is the responsibility of the fire tactical commander via National Fire Resilience to enlist their support.

These teams are a support sector for the fire and rescue service, with responders trained in specialised methods and equipment. They are responsible for:

- searching, detecting, locating and rescuing trapped casualties
- supporting the recovery of the deceased
- responding to serious transportation incidents involving trains, trams and aircraft

Humanitarian assistance

The strategic (gold) commander should, where appropriate, incorporate humanitarian assistance within resource planning for people directly and indirectly affected by the incident or emergency. In terms of facilities, this includes four types of reception centre. Further information about each of these centres is provided in the Civil contingencies APP:

- [survivor reception centres \(SuRC\)](#)
- [rest centres](#)
- [family and friends' reception centres](#)
- [humanitarian assistance centres](#)

Provision should be consistent with the principles stated in the [Charter for families bereaved through public tragedy](#).

A package of care should be provided. This brings together the work of multiple agencies to meet the scale of the incident and the needs of those affected. Commanders should consider including the following:

- basic shelter
- information about what has happened
- financial and legal support
- emotional support
- advice and direction on how to get further assistance

- communication facilitation, allowing people to meet or talk to each other
- a point of contact for ongoing support and advice

Community impact assessment (CIA)

The strategic (gold) commander should ensure that a community impact assessment (CIA) for the incident or emergency is conducted. This assessment should consider and record the consequences and potential consequences of the event on the community. It should also include an assessment of potential different consequences for identified groups in the community. It should be used to assist strategic and tactical response planning.

What is covered in a CIA is the decision of the strategic (gold) commander. They should:

- commence the assessment in the initial phases
- integrate the results of any health and safety risk assessment
- consult with community leaders and through independent advisory groups (IAGs)
- encompass a variety of people's needs, such as cultural and faith needs, as part of a humanitarian response
- consider commuters, tourists and any accessibility needs

Support needs cannot always be met for everyone, because of the:

- nature of the emergency or incident
- availability of powers or resources
- phase of the response (for example, initial response compared to later phases)
- immediacy of threats

In these circumstances, the CIA can act as a transparent record of the decision-making process and be used to manage the response when a critical incident has been declared.

Other APPs explain CIAs in more depth:

- **Community impact** is covered in the Engagement and communication APP. This APP also has a section on **IAGs** that can assist in reaching people from specific groups in a community.
- The public order public safety (POPS) APP has a section on developing policing plans, including **community engagement impact assessments and communication**.

Post-incident procedures (PIPs)

Where a death or serious injury occurs following police contact, there is a statutory requirement to refer the matter to the relevant independent investigative authority (IIA). Where this is the case, a PIP should be implemented.

The following table provides direction to the relevant guidance.

Trigger for PIP	Guidance
Death or serious injury, including statutory duty to refer to an IIA (for example, Independent Office for Police Conduct)	• Post-incident procedures following death or serious injury APP. • Deaths in custody guidance as part of the Detention and custody APP.
Critical incident	• How to restore public confidence (phase 3) of the Critical incident management APP.
Discharge of a firearm by police	• Post-deployment in the Armed policing APP.

Trigger for PIP	Guidance
A minister calls a public inquiry	• To approach with openness and candour, as described in the Code of Ethics. A failure to act with candour by obstructing or misleading inquiries or investigations could be legally sanctioned. The background to the Public Advocate and Accountability Bill (the 'Hillsborough Law') is contained within Bishop James Jones' report, 'The patronising disposition of an unaccountable power: A report to ensure the pain and suffering of the Hillsborough families is not repeated'. • The Information management APP, for relevant Review, retention and disposal guidance. • The Inquiries Act 2005 and The Inquiry Rules 2006.

Tags

APP Critical incidents Major incidents