

# Operational command role and responsibilities



## Role

The role of the operational commander is to work with other responder organisations, to protect life, property and the environment by ensuring that rapid and effective actions are implemented at an incident to save lives and reduce harm.

Those individuals who are responding on behalf of their organisation in either a command or management role are responsible for working together to develop and carry out the initial operational response, ensuring it is co-ordinated and appropriate to the scale of the incident. Where applicable, they will also implement the tactical plan.

## Responsibilities

- a. People who have an operational command or management role have a responsibility to ensure they are prepared to carry out their role; this includes keeping up to date with the policies and processes that are used for major incidents
- b. Protect life, property and the environment
- c. Make an initial assessment of the situation, using M/ETHANE to provide early situational awareness of the incident and the relevant resource requirements, ensuring that where appropriate, a major incident is declared and shared with partners
- d. Co-locate with representatives from other responder organisations to identify a Forward Command Point (FCP), if not already done, and agree initial actions including the timings of future meetings
- e. Make and share decisions with multi-agency colleagues according to your agreed level of responsibility, with an awareness of consequence management using the Joint Decision Model (JDM)
- f. Share information, intelligence and risk information to make effective joint decisions and co-ordinate operational plans by agreeing a common view of the situation, its consequences and potential outcomes and the actions required within a working strategy
- g. Identify the challenges that an organisation's operational plan may present to its multi-agency partners and take action to minimise or reduce them
- h. Carry out a briefing to key responders at the earliest opportunity and at regular intervals subsequently
- i. Identify the role of each organisation in managing and co-ordinating the care of victims and survivors, and their relatives and friends
- j. Understand how continually changing hazards and risks affect each organisation and work with multi-agency colleagues to address them ensuring that statutory responsibilities for the health, safety and welfare of personnel are met during the incident
- k. Consider the security of the scene and identify and agree triggers, signals and arrangements for emergency evacuation of responders
- l. Update the tactical commander on any changes, including any variation in agreed multi-agency tactics within their geographical or functional area of responsibility
- m. Request command support at the scene, for example, trained loggists. The amount and type of support will be determined by the incident.
- n. Maintain a contemporaneous log of decisions made, including the rationale for them and any actions to be carried out
- o. Carry out a post-incident hot debrief and contribute to formal structured debriefing where appropriate, ensuring issues concerning interoperability are shared using Joint Organisational Learning (JOL) Online

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13/10/2021	OFFICIAL	2 Operational Command Roles & Responsibilities	2.0	Page 1 of 1