

Appendix 3

Multi- agency incident response

The Strategic – Tactical - Operational command structure (sometimes referred to as Gold – Silver - Bronze) is used by the emergency services in the UK to establish a hierarchical framework for the command and control of major incidents and civil emergencies.

The Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) aim to help the blue light services ensure that

- their initial response to major incidents is more organised, structured and practiced,
- they recognize the need to ensure they constantly update their working practices and learn from events of the past together and not just in isolation.

For more information on the Joint decision Model and the Methane briefing tool used by category 1 responders see: <http://www.jesip.org.uk/aide-memoires>:

The police will generally be the organisation leading the multi-agency response.

- The **Strategic Commander** (or Gold) is in overall control of an organisation's resources at the incident. This person will not be on site but will formulate the strategy for dealing with an incident. If the Strategic Commanders of various agencies are not co-located during an incident response, they will keep in touch by telephone.
- The **Tactical Commander** (or Silver) manages the direction set by Strategic or Gold and makes it into a set of actions. Tactical is not located at the scene.
- An **Operational Commander** (or Bronze) directly controls the organisation's resources at the incident and works with his or her staff working at the scene.

HSE might be asked to attend either Strategic or Tactical Command where the Police Commander believes HSE can offer technical support to the response, in accordance with HSE's statutory role as a Category 2 responder

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/foi/internalops/og/og-00077.htm>. HSE **Incident Controllers** need to decide whether to support Strategic or Tactical Command and if so, who should represent HSE.

The Strategic commander equivalent rank in HSE is SCS/Band 1, but Incident Controllers should try to find out **what** support Strategic/ Tactical Command expects from HSE as this will help identify the most appropriate person to attend. Logistical difficulties, e.g. physically getting to Strategic/ Tactical locations, may mean that HSE can support Strategic/ Tactical Command by phone only.

Technical/scientific support

If necessary, the **Incident Controller**, in discussion with the **Incident Lead Inspector**, will request HSE Specialists or HSL to attend the incident (Out of hours contact details are in the MIRP contact lists.)

Scientific and Technical Advice Cell (STAC)

STAC may be convened in the event of a major incident involving several government departments. Its purpose is to provide coordinated scientific advice to local responders e.g. where there are wider health and environmental consequences. The STAC is activated by the Strategic (Gold) Commander and is chaired by the lead department or agency.

HSE may be asked to nominate a STAC representative. This could be an HSE/HSL specialist, depending on the nature of the incident.