



# SCENE SAFETY & ASSESSMENT

## Aims

- Describe a safe approach to a scene
- Describe the initial scene assessment

## Approaching a scene

As much information should be obtained about the scene as possible before and during deployment, specifically with regard to hazards including poor weather/visibility. Initial assessment of the scene can often be done from the air to establish not only the safest landing site but also specific scene hazards.

All crew must approach the scene wearing appropriate PPE (flight suit +/- high viz jacket, boots). Helmets with visors should be worn in all cases where cutting/ movement of wreckage is expected. Nitrile gloves or equivalent should always be worn for direct patient handling, and leather overgloves are required when handling wreckage.

Scene safety **MUST** be established before patient contact. This may mean that until further help is available the patient cannot be approached. Consideration should be given specifically to traffic, chemical hazards (see STEP 1-2-3 approach in SOP: CBRN), electrical hazards, physical violence, unsafe structures, vehicle technology e.g. airbags.

Contact should be made as soon as possible with other emergency services on scene for both scene information as well as patient details. Even if other services are already present, crew must make their own scene assessment to look for hazards and potentially 'missed' patients.

## **Specific hazards**

### **New vehicle technology**

Fire crew will assess vehicles for 'safety features' which may prove hazardous. They now carry a database of all *new* vehicles detailing airbags etc. NOTE some airbags will only partially deploy if the passenger is small, so a seemingly deployed airbag may still retain some charge and deploy again. Crew should be aware of common airbag locations within a vehicle, and of the presence of "ROPS" (roll over protection system) found on some convertible sports cars, where a metal plate may be fired up from where the rear windscreen would be (and typically where an extrication board is carried out!)

### **Chemical**

See SOP: CBRN

### **Electrical**

National Grid Pylons require 18 metres distance from cables. Cables which appear to be isolated may be remotely activated without warning. Police/firecrew must confirm isolation before the casualty is approached.

### **Aircraft crash**

Expert assessment is required, and approach should only be made if fire crew on scene state it is safe to do so. Particular hazards include engines which may still be active, fuel / fire, structural collapse, and airborne particulate matter from the construction materials which pose a respiratory threat. Military aircraft also may have ejector seats, an explosive operated canopy jettison as well as live munitions.

### **Rail incidents**

Passage onto rail tracks should only proceed if accompanied by a rail engineer.

Overhead cables should be avoided by 3 metres.

'Third rails' carry 750volts and should be avoided.

### **Structural collapse**

USAR teams from the fire service will bring casualties to you. Do not enter a structurally unsafe building.