

ACTION AT AN EMERGENCY

In any emergency it is important that you follow a clear plan of action. This will enable you to prioritise the demands that may be made upon you, as well as help you decide on your best response.

ASSESSING THE SITUATION

Evaluating the scene accurately is one of the most important factors in the management of an incident. You should stay calm. State that you have first aid training and, if there are no medical personnel in attendance, calmly take charge of the situation.

Identify any safety risks and assess the resources available to you. Action for key dangers you may face, such as fire, are dealt with in this chapter, but be aware, too, of trip hazards, sharp objects, chemical spills and falling masonry.

MAKING AN AREA SAFE

The conditions that give rise to an incident may still present a danger and must be eliminated if possible. It may be that a simple measure, such as turning off the ignition of a car to reduce the risk of fire, is sufficient. As a last resort, move the casualty to safety. Usually specialist help and equipment is required for this.

When approaching a casualty make sure you protect yourself: wear high-visibility clothing, gloves and head protection if you have them. Remember, too, that a casualty faces the risk of injury from the same hazards that you face. If extrication from the scene is delayed, try to protect the casualty from any additional hazards – without endangering yourself.

If you cannot make an area safe, then call **999/112 for emergency help**. Stand clear of the incident until the emergency services have secured the scene.

The principle steps are: to assess the situation, to make the area safe (if possible) and to give first aid. Use the primary survey (pp.44–45) to identify the most seriously injured casualties and treat them in the order of priority.

All incidents should be managed in a similar manner. Consider the following:

- **Safety** What are the dangers and do they still exist? Are you wearing protective equipment? Is it safe for you to approach?
- **Scene** What factors are involved at the incident? What are the mechanisms of the injuries (pp.42–43)? How many casualties are there? What are the potential injuries?
- **Situation** What happened? How many people are involved and what age are they? Are any of them children or elderly?



Making a vehicle safe

Wear a high-visibility jacket if you have one to alert others of your presence. Switch off the ignition (even if the engine is no longer running); this reduces the risk of a crash causing a fire.

GIVING EMERGENCY HELP

Once an area has been made safe, use the primary survey (pp.44–45) to quickly carry out an initial assessment of the casualty or casualties to establish treatment priorities. If there is more than one casualty, attend to those with life-threatening conditions first. If possible, treat casualties in the position in which you find them; move them only if they are in immediate

danger or if it is necessary for you to be able to provide life-saving treatment.

Enlist help from others if possible. Ask bystanders to call for the emergency services (p.23). They can also help to protect a casualty's privacy, put out warning triangles in the event of a vehicle incident (p.30) or fetch equipment while you begin first aid.



Begin treatment

Start life-saving first aid as soon as possible. Ask others to call for help and fetch equipment such as an AED (automated external defibrillator).

ASSISTING THE EMERGENCY SERVICES

Hand over any notes you have made to the emergency services when they arrive (p.21). Answer any questions they may have and follow any instructions. As a first aider you may be asked to help, for example, to move a casualty using specialist equipment. If so, you should always follow their instructions.

services may already be in attendance, in which case you should keep clear unless they give you specific instructions.

If the emergency services are not in attendance, it is important to keep bystanders clear. Make sure everyone is at least 50m (55yd) away from the landing site, and that no-one is smoking. Kneel down as the helicopter

HELICOPTER RESCUE

Occasionally, helicopter rescue is required. If a casualty is being rescued in this way, there are a number of safety rules to follow. The emergency

approaches, keeping well away from the rotor blades. Once the helicopter has landed do not approach it. Keep bystanders back and wait for a member of the crew to announce you