



1. Basic Guidance Information

You need to know the role you are expected to undertake in the event of a serious civil incident in our region.

The Church of England, with its extensive parish coverage, tends to take the lead role in organising 'Faiths Teams' to respond to major local incidents. Anglican clergy are quickly contactable by the 'Faiths' Civil Incident Co-ordinator' but clergy of other Christian denominations and leaders of other faiths need to be similarly available. They should ensure their contact details are lodged with the Co-ordinator in case they are needed to join a response team.

A few clergy are asked to be initial liaison contacts, receiving callout direct from a local authority and it is they, with their co-ordinator, who will be responsible for alerting the appropriate people whose input is requested by those commanding the disaster response.

On hearing of an incident those contacts should:

- (1) Consider themselves to be 'on call' and ensure they are ready to respond to a call from the Co-ordinator or emergency phone holder via their agreed telephone contact number. That is ALL they are required to do.
- (2) In co-operation with the Local Authority Emergency Control, they may be called for deployment to sites where they are required: Prepared Rest Centres, Information and Family Liaison Points, Emergency Scenes, Temporary Mortuary, etc.
- (3) Clergy engaged in the callout must wear identification – clerical collar / fluorescent "Clergy" jacket, etc. If you have an "Emergency Sticker", your vehicle should display it clearly.
- (4) From the time of initial call, everyone should keep a written LOG of all calls, actions and conversations, including time, place, person(s), telephone numbers and action taken.
- (5) Those deployed should take with them: this card, notebook, pen, mobile phone, (use may be restricted at emergency sites), bible, sacramental oil, (as appropriate), protective gloves.
- (6) Those deployed should report back to the Co-ordinator regularly.

(7) Where more than one person from the Faiths team is deployed to the same place, one team member should be designated as 'in-charge' for communication purposes with the site commander/Faith co-ordinator.

(8) All media enquiries should be directed to the Co-ordinator who will contact the Diocesan Communications Officer, who must be aware of the County Media Plan and the media response procedures adopted by the Emergency Services and Local Authorities with whom any news release must be cleared.

(9) Mobile phones are useful but their use may be restricted at emergency sites. Faith team members will need close contact with the local scene commanders for communication with the Faiths Co-ordinator who will stand them down / arrange replacements as time moves on.



2. Incident Site

DO NOT GO TO THE INCIDENT SITE unless asked to do so by the Faiths Co-ordinator.

INCIDENT sites are often either dangerous or a crime scene (or both) and the police will usually be concerned to move people away as quickly as possible. CLERGY may only be required there if someone is trapped, cannot be released and requires spiritual care. If you are asked to go to an incident site, report to the POLICE Incident Commander at the Police Forward Control who will arrange for you to be escorted where needed.



3. Other Areas of Work

Temporary Mortuaries: to support relatives involved in the identification process and provide advice on funeral procedures (but not to agree to take funerals).

Rest Centres: to listen and respond to people displaced from their homes: Report to the people in charge. Be available to anyone who wants your pastoral support. Safeguard confidences.

Refreshment Areas: to provide a listening ear for emergency services personnel and others who have themselves come

under stress. NB; police fire service and hospitals have their own chaplains.

Your Own Team: Do care for the other members of your area faith team and ensure they have breaks, are released every four hours and are able to unburden - as they also may need pastoral care.

At any incident, before departing, the area faith team should debrief, ideally with the co-ordinator, discussing their feelings and reactions. If the experience is particularly harrowing, this may need to be revisited.



4. Roles & Responsibilities

Everyone involved in a civil emergency is called upon to fulfil his or her ordinary role in extraordinary circumstances. The overall aim is to help people in a traumatic situation and offer comfort and professional help as required. Clergy may provide spiritual comfort, guidance and a listening ear to the injured the dying the bereaved and those in shock.

Only very occasionally will incidents result in clergy support being directly requested. However, some developing incidents, such as a fire - or an event similar to the random shootings in Cumbria in 2010 – might require members of the clergy to be available and accessible to the community. It would be appropriate for places of worship to be opened in the wake of an event for members of all the faiths affected. It is important to be in contact with the Co-ordinator regularly and ensure that relief ministers are alerted.

Guidelines

- Do work in partnership with the other professionals present.
- Do follow the chain of command and obey those in charge.
- Do be watchful of the needs of other helpers who may be affected by the incident.
- Do be responsible about having a thorough debrief.
- Do look after your own needs and those of other Faiths team workers and ask for replacement cover if it is not forthcoming.
- Do not leave the control centre before your replacements have arrived, or without informing your fellow team members or the Co-ordinator.
- Do not step beyond your capabilities, e.g. trying to give First Aid.



5. The Media

Local Authority Emergency Control will have a media officer and multi-agency media plan.

The Diocesan Communications Officer will act for the church and other faiths. Beware of media people attempting to gain confidential information about people involved in the emergency. (Some unscrupulous reporters have tried posing as medical staff or clergy.)

However, it is possible that a worker could find themselves under very severe media pressure: if so, all that is needed is to say (i) how sorry you are (ii) that your thoughts and prayers are with those who are suffering and their families (iii) all involved are doing all they can. *Never give opinions. Do not offer suggestions about causes, people's responsibilities, theological reflections, nor mention the number of deaths or casualties.*

If clergy have any concerns about media coverage or intrusion, the Anglican Diocese of Guildford's Communication Team is available 24/7 to give advice and support. Tel: 07779 654975



6. Pastoral Care

This may include one or more of the following:

To be available to anyone who wishes to relate to one of the clergy. Some people on

these occasions find clergy a more acceptable source of support than other professionals.

To listen and respond to a person's needs to talk and explore their reactions to the trauma.

To be a channel of communication with a distressed person's home church, by personal contact, telephone or letter.

To be a source of information to other professionals on care and support of bereaved people, maybe on religious observances, which may be of particular importance to people in distress.

To be an advocate and to speak or act on behalf of people who are distressed and/or help empower them.

To co-operate with the emergency planning team to host visits from church leaders and others.



7. Spiritual Care

Prayer – praying with/ for the people involved.

Sacraments – administering the (sacrament of the sick), confession, baptism, or communion,

(though nothing should be administered by mouth if a person is likely to need an operation).

Theology – helping people who wish to explore issues like: why did God allow this to happen? Why did this happen to me? Why my grandchild and not me?

Biblical Reflection – finding significant passages in the scriptures which may help a distressed person.

Spiritual Space – arranging for a church or appropriate place to be open for prayer in the vicinity, for people to use in whatever way helps them, with spiritual pastoral and practical support available for those who seek them.

Summary of Duties

- Remain by designated telephone.
- Keep a written log
- Deploy to requested site suitably equipped/clothed
- Assess situation
- Report to Liaison Contact
- Wear protective gloves where necessary
- Be aware of your own tiredness and limits
- Brief the person relieving you

Things always to have ready

A fluorescent jacket marked 'Clergy', notebook, pens, torch, protective gloves, personal ID, appropriate Scriptures/prayers and a bottle of water.

A 'civil emergency' or 'major incident' is an event which requires the attention of more than the usual services, fire, police and ambulance.



Diocese of Guildford

What to do in the event of a major incident or civil emergency

Guidance for clergy and other faith leaders within Surrey and NE Hants



The Church of England's Major Incident/Civil Emergency Co-ordinator in the area covered by the Diocese of Guildford is:

RICHARD TROUGHTON

Richard is an LLM (Reader) from Farnborough. An aeronautical engineer of long experience, he has brought together the diocese's link with the two entirely separate Civil Emergency structures for Surrey and Hants. At the same time, in line with the development of government-encouraged 'Local Resilience Forums', he is making links with other faith groups to ensure their availability in the event of a major incident.

Richard shares with a small group of diocesan clergy the week-by-week responsibility for responding to the emergency phone link with the County Controller, but should you wish to contact him he is available on 07841 128612.