

Additional arrangements for contaminated fatalities

This page is from APP, the official source of professional practice for policing.

First published 23 October 2013 Updated 8 October 2019

Written by College of Policing

2 mins read

There are potential health risks for recovering fatalities when the incident involves the possible presence of contaminating agents on, or around, deceased persons or human remains. The lead pathologist may be able to advise the senior identification manager (SIM) on chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN)-specific identification methods, such as whole body bag CT scanning.

CBRN incident

When a mass fatality is identified as a CBRN incident, the scientific and technical advice cell should be formed to provide health and safety advice to the strategic coordination group (SCG) and the mass fatality coordination group (MFCG).

The process for CBRN mass fatality incidents focuses on placing the deceased or human remains in a body bag at the scene, as well as limiting contact and exposure throughout the recovery, postmortem procedures and identification procedures.

Police commanders should consider additional issues in the recovery of contaminated fatalities and human remains from mass fatality incidents.

Recovering contaminated fatalities

Police commanders should ensure that:

- body recovery in a contaminated environment is only carried out by personnel who are trained and equipped to respond to a CBRN incident
- trained CBRN personnel undertake the scene assessment and recovery of personal property
- trained CBRN personnel undertake the police roles in the mortuary

- precautions are taken to ensure that health and safety risks to those involved in responding to the incident are adequately controlled
- the spread of contamination from the hot zone is limited
- contaminated fatalities are identified and sensitively managed through burial, cremation or other arrangement in a way that avoids harm to others or the environment
- the needs of the bereaved families are taken into account in the disaster victim identification (DVI) process, without jeopardising the safety of the family or other responders involved in the process

Tags

Civil emergencies