



**Service Policy: PREPOL02  
Major Incident Policy**

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1.0	Feb 10	[REDACTED]	Policy Review
1.1	Apr 11	[REDACTED]	Policy Review
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1.3	16/12/2013	[REDACTED]	Policy Review
1.4	27/03/2015	[REDACTED]	Policy Review
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1.7	30/03/2018	[REDACTED]	Policy review
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1.9	28/02/2020	[REDACTED]	Policy Review
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1.11	13/03/2024	[REDACTED]	Policy Review
2.0	15/04/2026	[REDACTED]	Policy Review

**Equalities Impact Assessment:**

Initial	Full	Date	Reviewed by	Comments
	X		ED&I TEAM	LOCATED ON PORTAL
		4/5/23	GM S McGuinness	Located on Portal EIA Library

**Civil Contingencies Impact Assessment:**

Date	Reviewed by	Comments

**Related Documents:**

Doc. Type	Ref No.	Title	Location
Policy	PREPOL01	Incident Command Policy	MFRS Portal
SOP	6.1.0	Incident Command	MFRS Portal
SOP	6.9.0	Major Incidents	MFRS Portal
SI	0076	Operational Support Room	MFRS Portal
MRF		Merseyside Emergency Response Manual	Resilience Direct

**Distribution List:**

Name	Position	Department

**Sign-Off List:**

Name	Position

**Target Audience:**

All MFRS	Principal Officers	Senior Officers	Operational Crews	Fire Safety	Community Fire Safety	Support Staff
x						

**Ownership:**

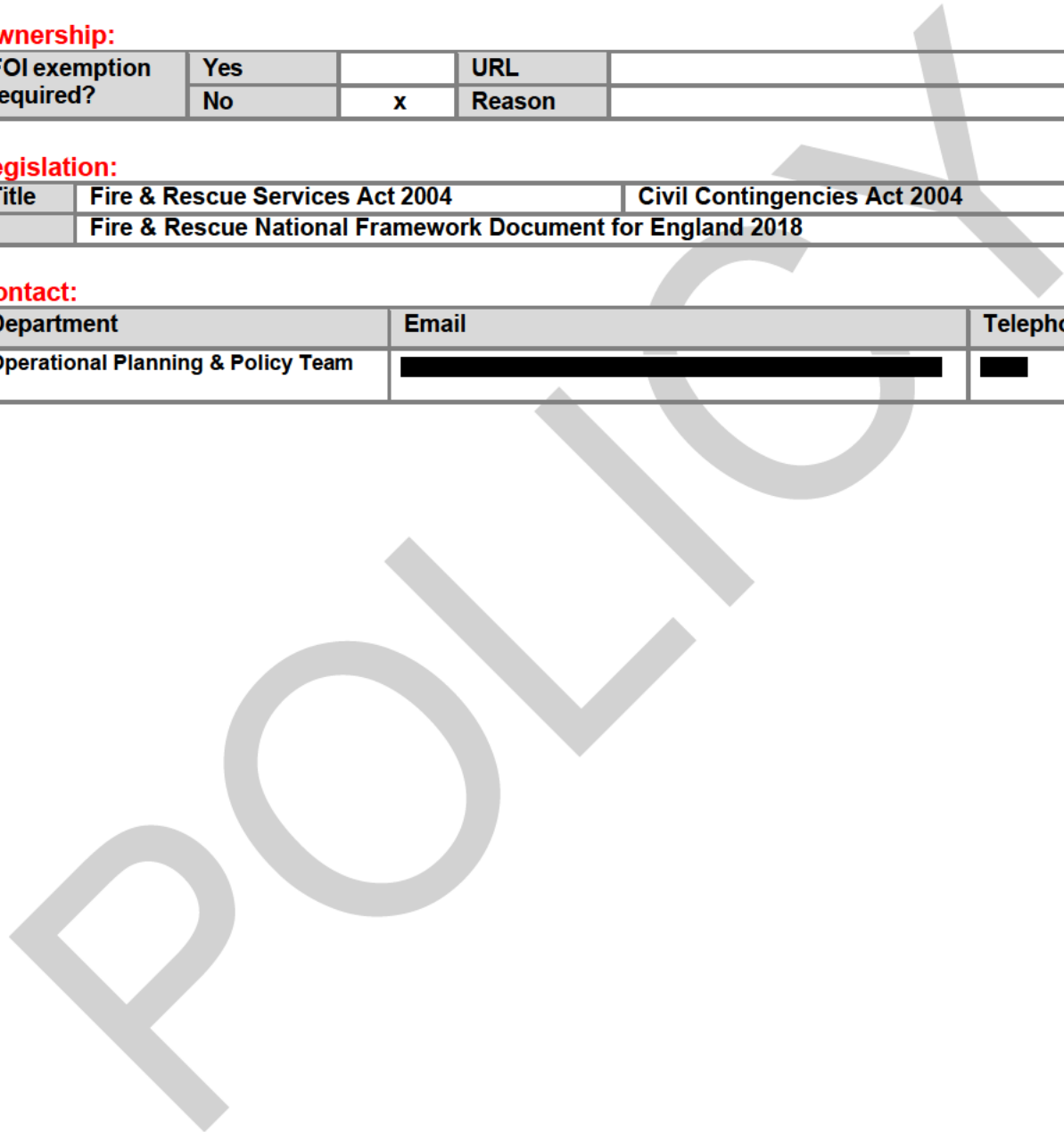
FOI exemption required?	Yes		URL	
	No	x	Reason	

**Legislation:**

Title	Fire & Rescue Services Act 2004	Civil Contingencies Act 2004
	Fire & Rescue National Framework Document for England 2018	

**Contact:**

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## PREPOL02 Major Incident Policy

### 1. Policy Introduction and Background

It is the policy of Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority (MFRA) to ensure that the Service is prepared to respond effectively to major incidents through robust planning, co-ordination, and multi-agency collaboration.

Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service (MFRS), as a Category 1 responder under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, has a statutory responsibility to assess risks, plan for emergencies, and work collaboratively with partner agencies to protect the public, environment, and critical infrastructure.

This policy establishes the overarching framework through which MFRS will:

- Prepare for foreseeable and emerging risks
- Respond to major incidents in a coordinated and effective manner
- Support recovery and restoration activities
- Fulfil its legal and national framework obligations.

This policy aligns with:

- The Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004
- The Fire and Rescue National Framework for England
- Civil Contingencies Act 2004
- HM Government guidance, including Emergency Preparedness and Emergency Response & Recovery
- National Operational Guidance (NOG) and JESIP principles.

MFRS will maintain a comprehensive suite of operational plans, procedures, and risk information to support the delivery of this policy, including Site Specific Risk Information (SSRI), Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs), and Operational Response Plans (ORPs).

### 2. Policy Explanation

A major incident is defined as:

An event or situation, with a range of serious consequences, which requires special arrangements to be implemented by one or more emergency responder agencies.

This includes incidents that:

- Are beyond the scope of normal day-to-day operations
- Pose significant risk to life, property, the environment, or national security
- Require a co-ordinated multi-agency response

MFRS recognises that major incidents may arise from a wide range of causes, including natural hazards, technological incidents, and deliberate acts.

In fulfilling its role, MFRS will operate in accordance with its statutory duties as a Category 1 responder, which include:

- Assessing the risk of emergencies and maintaining risk-based plans
- Ensuring arrangements are in place for effective response and business continuity
- Co-operating and sharing information with partner agencies
- Supporting arrangements to warn, inform and advise the public.

MFRS's primary operational role during a major incident is to:

- Protect life and property
- Rescue persons from fire, wreckage, or other hazardous environments
- Prevent escalation through hazard control and mitigation
- Manage or support environmental protection measures
- Provide specialist capabilities, including national resilience assets where required
- Support partner agencies in casualty management and wider incident resolution.

All activity will be underpinned by the principles of joint working as defined within JESIP, ensuring that agencies:

- Co-locate where appropriate
- Communicate effectively
- Co-ordinate activity
- Share information to develop a joint understanding of risk
- Maintain shared situational awareness.

MFRS will ensure that its approach to major incidents is:

- Risk-informed and proportionate
- Scalable and adaptable to the nature of the incident
- Aligned to national doctrine and best practice
- Focused on the preservation of life as the overriding priority.

### **3. Policy Implementation**

MFRS will implement this policy through the establishment and maintenance of effective command, co-ordination, and governance arrangements that support a structured and scalable response to major incidents.

A multi-tiered command framework will be adopted, consistent with national doctrine, enabling strategic, tactical, and operational decision-making to be clearly defined and aligned. This approach ensures that:

- Strategic direction is established in collaboration with partner agencies
- Tactical coordination translates strategic intent into effective plans
- Operational activity delivers outcomes safely and efficiently.

MFRS will work in partnership with local, regional, and national agencies through established multi-agency co-ordination structures, including those facilitated by the Merseyside Resilience Forum (MRF). These arrangements support integrated decision-making, resource coordination, and shared situational awareness.

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The Service will maintain preparedness through:

- The development and regular review of operational plans and risk information
- Training and exercising programmes, including multi-agency and high-fidelity exercises
- Continuous learning through debriefs, operational assurance, and national learning systems (e.g. NOL/JOL)
- Assurance processes to ensure operational readiness and compliance with national standards.

Governance and oversight of this policy will be maintained through established Service structures, ensuring that:

- Performance and preparedness are regularly reviewed
- Lessons identified are captured and acted upon
- Policies and procedures remain current, effective, and aligned to emerging risks.

Detailed operational procedures, command arrangements, and specific roles and responsibilities are set out in supporting Service documents, including relevant SOPs, Service Instructions, and multi-agency plans.

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All Policies can be found on the [Website](#)

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