

Sussex Faith Emergency Response Plan

Diocese of Chichester

1. Introduction

This plan sets out the role of clergy and ministers of religion deployed in the event of a major incident being declared by Sussex Police. The plan is managed by the Sussex Police Chaplain on behalf of the Diocese of Chichester, operating within the wider Sussex Resilience Forum.

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.'*¹**

- 'Major Incident (MI): Any emergency that requires the implementation of special arrangements by one or more of the emergency services, the NHS or the local authority for ':

- the rescue and transport of a large number of casualties.
- the involvement either directly or indirectly of large numbers of people.
- the handling of a large number of enquiries likely to be generated both from the public and the news media usually to the Police.
- the large-scale deployment of the combined resources of the emergency services.
- the mobilisation and organisation of the emergency services and supporting organisations, e.g. Local Authority, to cater for the threat of death, serious injury or homelessness to a large number of people.

The role of clergy and ministers during a major incident is to be available to provide pastoral care to members of the public and emergency responders who may be affected by the incident.

Clergy and ministers responding will expect to meet with people of all faiths and none, maintaining due respect of their beliefs, traditions and customs and recognizing the spiritual dimension of life and death.

The role may well be a ministry of care and comfort to relatives and others caught up in the disaster. This may be exercised at a temporary mortuary, casualty and rest centre, relatives' enquiry station or similar premises, established for the purpose close to the incident.

¹ 'Major Incident,' <https://www.jesip.org.uk/definitions>

To ensure a coordinated response, clergy and ministers will only attend a major incident in accordance with this plan and should not self-deploy. During the incident, they will operate within the command structure designated for the incident.

2. Emergency Response Plan

The Rural Deanery network will be used as the organisational structure to respond to a major incident.

In the event of a major incident, the following process will be followed:

- Sussex Police Force control room will contact the Lead Chaplain, [or Gatwick chaplain for an airport incident]
- Lead Chaplain will contact Archdeacon/Rural Dean responsible for the area in which the incident occurs.
- Archdeacon will liaise with Sussex Police Lead Chaplain who will provide tactical advice and support to the Archdeacon.
- Lead Chaplain to obtain operational requirement, as requested by Sussex Police including: location of incident; rendezvous points; number of clergy required; command officer responsible for clergy; role required to perform; and anticipated duration of deployment.
- Archdeacon/Rural Dean to contact relevant clergy or ministers and deploy as required.
- Archdeacon to maintain contact during deployment to ensure appropriate welfare needs and arrange for relief from other clergy in the event of a protracted deployment. Archdeacon to update Diocesan Bishop as appropriate during the incident.
- During deployment, clergy to operate under the direction of nominated "Bronze Commander" from Sussex Police and update Archdeacon as appropriate.
- At the conclusion of the incident, clergy to report to nominated Bronze Commander providing any information as required and notify Archdeacon/Lead Chaplain upon their dismissal. Archdeacon to notify the Bishops.
- **Post incident**, Lead Chaplain to remain the single point of contact for external agencies. In addition, Archdeacon/Lead Chaplain to ascertain ongoing welfare needs of deployed clergy ensuring appropriate support is offered.

3. Gatwick Airport

In the event of an incident at Gatwick Airport, clergy attending will follow the process as outlined above under the Archdeacon of Horsham. Additional training will be given to clergy who may be deployed at Gatwick.

4. Administration of plan

All clergy and ministers deployed under this plan operate on behalf of the Diocese of Chichester, irrespective of denomination or faith. A list of Anglican clergy is maintained by the Diocese of Chichester. Should an Archdeacon not be available, the next nearest available Archdeacon within the Diocese will assume the role on their behalf.

Sussex Police hold details of ministers of religion via the Faith Forum networks and may be called upon if required via the Sussex Police Chaplain.

Only those directed by Archdeacons may be deployed and should be in good standing with their organisations, be in possession of a current DBS certificate and be covered under their own organisation's insurance policy.

In order to maintain security, clergy should carry the Diocesan Identification Card and photo identification such as current passport or a driving licence. At the conclusion of the incident, the existence of any records made by clergy should be notified to the appropriate Bronze Commander. Archdeacon/Lead Chaplain and clergy should be available for any post incident de-brief as required.