

EOC Action Card

This action card is designed to support our response to Water Incidents, both inland and at sea.

1. First define the incident as either an **Inland Water Incident** OR a **Coastal Water Incident**. Do not spend too long attempting to define the incident, this can always be revised.

Definition – Inland Water Incident

For the purposes of these action cards, **Inland Water** is defined as a Lake, River, Pond, Reservoir or an area of Flood Water–this includes tidal estuaries, coastal marinas, and unstable surfaces (mud / ice).

Actions to be undertaken by EOC on receipt of a call to an incident involving:

- A casualty(s) reported to be within an area of Inland Water
- A casualty(s) who is in a boat on an area of Inland Water
- A casualty(s) who requires to be conveyed across an area of Inland Water
- A casualty(s) who is believed to be within 3 meters of an area of Inland Water, as defined above
- A casualty(s) reported to be on an unstable surface (mud / ice)

Definition – Coastal Water Incident

For the purposes of these action cards, **Coastal Water** is defined as a Beach, Harbour, Port, or an area of sea –this includes tidal estuaries, coastal marinas, and unstable surfaces (mud / ice).

Actions to be undertaken by EOC on receipt of a call to an incident involving:

- A casualty(s) reported to be within the sea.
- A casualty(s) who is in a boat at sea.
- A casualty(s) who requires to be conveyed across an area of sea/coastline

****If the incident meets the criteria for a Maritime Incident, *Op Waypoint* or *Op Lanyard*, then you should follow the Maritime Incident Response Plan. If in doubt, ASK FOR HELP****

At all times ask, Do I Need Help?

Water Incidents

EOC Action Card

EMA/Call Handling Actions	Time	Tick If Completed
Inform the EOC Manager and EMA Team Leader of a potential water incident.		
Ask for the advice to persons in a vehicle guidance if this is needed. NHS Pathways should present this information for you.		
Dispatch Actions (Resource Dispatcher or Dispatch Team Leader)	Time	Tick If Completed
Inform the EOC Operational Commander (EOCM).		
Dispatch the nearest Operational Commander (OTL) with Water Safety PPE.		
Consider deployment of the nearest HART team to the scene, in the absence of the HART Tasking desk call the HART Team Leader to pass details of the incident and for support/guidance.		
Inform the appropriate Fire & Rescue Service and/or Coast Guard and provide the incident details (if not already known) and request their attendance as required. Communicating with other agencies early is a critical step.		
Dispatch the appropriate number of Double Crewed Ambulances (DCA) to the scene (<i>this is a dynamic decision and should be based on the information received</i>).		
Remember that patients who are submerged or immersed in water should be considered saveable life by EOC. Decisions about rescue / recovery operations cannot be made within the EOC environment.		

Water Incidents

EOC Action Card

Advice for Attending Resources (Pass via MDT or Airwave)

- All resources attending the scene should be reminded to don the appropriate PPE for working within 3 metres of the water's edge.
- This consists of a high visibility jacket, helmet with the chin strap undone, life jacket on top of all clothing, with leg loops through legs and all straps tight. SECAmb responders are to safely use Fire & Rescue, Coastguard, RNLI lifejackets until the OTL or HART arrive.
- Under no circumstances should they enter the water, or go on the water in a boat, unless they are trained to do so, with the appropriate PPE (i.e. HART).
- Operational Responders should be encouraged to follow their own **Water Incident Action Cards** found on content locker.
- Advise all resources attending the scene that they should utilise JESIP principles, in particular – co-locate and undertake a Joint Dynamic Risk Assessment (JDRA) with all agencies on arrival on scene and agree course of action.

Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Principles (JESIP) Considerations

For Consideration Situation Awareness / Information Gathering

It may be useful for EOC staff to gather this information from other control rooms or the 999 callers if a vehicle is submerged in water.

- Water depth & speed of flow, is the vehicle still moving / stable?
- How far has the vehicle moved?
- Width of river / flood, Type of vehicle, Electrics still working?

Water Incidents

SECamb Operational Responders Making Rescue Attempts

In some rare circumstances it may be necessary for SECamb Operational Responders to make rescue attempts when a casualty is in the water. If safe to do so, attempts should be made to assist the casualty from the water using any available rescue equipment such as reach poles or throwlines available from the OTL or HART, Fire & Rescue, Coast Guard, RNLI or locally sourced from a public source i.e. life rings etc.

The correct PPE must always be worn.

Operational Responders should be encouraged to follow their own **Water Incident Action Cards** found on content locker or provided by the OTL / HART.

EOC Staff should log that SECamb Operational Responders are making active rescue attempts and inform the Tactical Commander and Tactical Advisor (NILO).

Water Incidents

EOC Action Card

EOC Operational Commander (EOC Manager)	Time	Initial
Consider if the incident requires the immediate implementation of the Maritime Response Plan. Think Operational Lanyard / Operation Waypoint.		
Review the incident and ensure the required response / actions are being completed.		
Provide the “ <i>EOC Advice To Persons in a Vehicle</i> ” action card to the EMA & EMA Team Leader if required. NHS Pathways version 46 and onwards should provide this information.		
Inform the duty Tactical Commander.		
Inform the on-call Tactical Advisor.		
Request a M/ETHANE from the responding resource or operational commander if required.		
Be ready to react to the declaration of a major incident by our service or another responding agency.		
Consider informing the EOC / 111 Tactical Commander, depending on the severity of the incident or if you require action from them.		
Remember that patients who are submerged or immersed in water should be considered saveable life by EOC. Decisions about rescue / recovery operations cannot be made within the EOC environment.		

Water Incidents

EOC Action Card

Helpful Reminders and Useful Information

Submersion – Where the airway is being occluded by liquid; the remainder of the body does not necessarily have to be below the surface of the water.

Immersion – This means being covered in a liquid medium and does not necessarily imply that the entire body must be submerged.

Secondary Drowning or Near Drowning – These terms are no longer accepted and should not be used in healthcare settings.

SOLAS – This is the international convention for the safety of lives at sea.

HM Coastguard – Most of our interactions with HM Coastguard involve search and rescue operations. Search and Rescue helicopter operations are outsourced to Bristow. Local Coastguard Rescue teams are made up of on-call volunteers who respond in their own time.

RNLI – Provides a volunteer-based rescue capability at sea and beach lifeguard provisions in some locations. Some lifeboats operate independently of the RNLI and may be involved in a rescue.

Swift Water Rescue Capability (HART) - This capability allows HART clinicians to safely access, treat, and evacuate patients in fast-moving or contaminated water environments, such as rivers, flood zones, and urban watercourses.

Flood Alerts & Warnings – Please visit [Flood alerts and warnings - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/flood-alerts)

Fire & Rescue Services – Local Fire and Rescue Services respond to inland water rescue incidents and can provide a range of rescue capabilities.

Water Incidents



EOC Action Card

NHS PATHWAYS VERSION 46 (and subsequent versions) will automatically provide “advice to person in a vehicle”. In the absence of this being presented via Pathways please refer to the below.

EOC Advice to Persons in a Vehicle
Situation Awareness / Information Gathering Water depth & speed of flow, is the vehicle still moving / stable? How far has the vehicle moved? Width of river / flood, Type of vehicle, Electrics still working?

STABLE Vehicle No persons are in imminent danger Water levels are not rising Vehicle is not moving.	UNSTABLE Vehicle Persons in imminent danger Water levels are rising Vehicle is moving	Emergency Exit Advice
---	---	------------------------------



GUIDANCE • Remain calm. • Remain on the phone. • Remain in vehicle and await rescue. • Remove seat belts. • Lower windows as an emergency escape route (electric power may be lost quickly) • Prepare to evacuate should situation worsen & climb onto the top of the vehicle. • Await attendance of specialist response. • Attract the attention of emergency responders. Sound horn (if working) to attract attention. • Do nothing until instructed. • Do not worry if rescuers move away, it may be part of their rescue plan & information gathering process. •	GUIDANCE • Remain calm. • Remain on the phone. • Depending on vehicle stability and situation, and as a last resort, exit the vehicle carefully at the 1st opportunity & get on to roof utilising any buoyancy aids (i.e. child's booster seats etc). • Signal to emergency responders. • Do nothing until instructed. • Do not worry if rescuers move away, it may be part of their rescue plan & information gathering process.	GUIDANCE • Release seatbelts. • Remove head restraints (this can make it easier for passengers to escape, or the restraint can be used to break windows if required) • The vehicle will sink heavy (engine) end first. • Exit by open window, or if able to open a door (in deep and flowing water this may be difficult / impossible). Opening either may mean further water will enter the vehicle– be prepared and plan for this. • Consider speed of the water, depth, how cold the water is, individual's capabilities in water prior to making the decision to escape vehicle. • Vehicles will not sink immediately; however, occupants should escape as soon as possible. Remove children as soon as possible with adult assistance. Utilise any child's booster seats as personal buoyancy aids.
--	---	--

Water Incidents

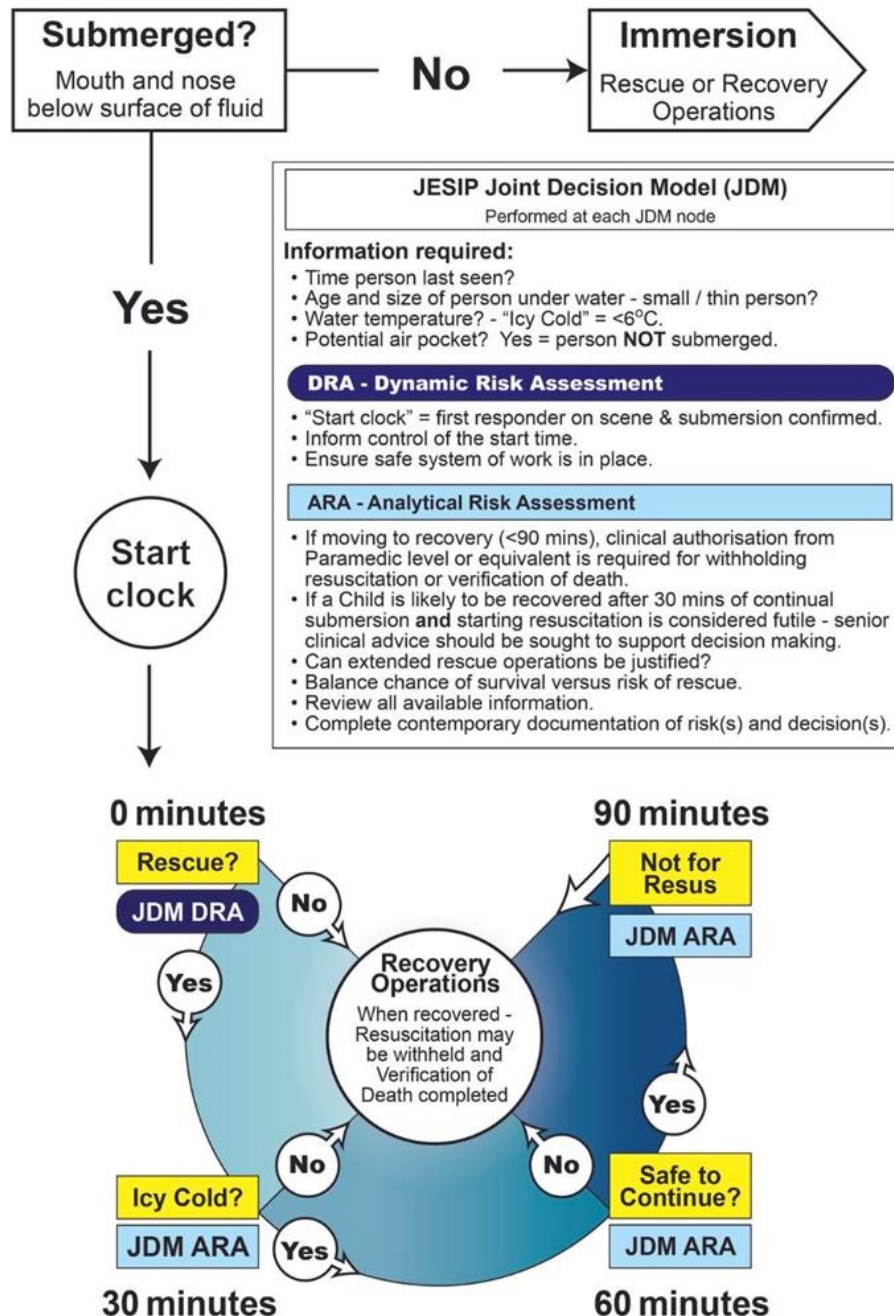


EOC Action Card

FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY – NOT FOR USE WITHIN EOC

Rescue or Recovery Decisions Cannot Be Made with the EOC environment.

SUBMERGED PERSON TOOL



Water Incidents