

**North Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service  
Special Service Calls Standard Operating Procedure**

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**INTRODUCTION**

When personnel and equipment of North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service are employed for services other than fire fighting, those services will be referred to as a 'Special Service Call' (SSC) and may be either 'emergency' or 'non-emergency.'

Section 11 of the FRA 2004 provides FRS's with the power to respond to all types of incidents

- 1) A fire and rescue authority may take any action it considers appropriate—
  - (a) in response to an event or situation of a kind mentioned in subsection (2)
  - (b) for the purpose of enabling action to be taken in response to such an event or situation.
  
- 2) The event or situation is one that causes or is likely to cause—
  - (a) one or more individuals to die, be injured or become ill;
  - (b) harm to the environment (including the life and health of plants and animals).

Section 19 of the FRA 2004 allows a Fire Authority to charge for its services where these fall outside its statutory duties. However, Fire and Rescue Authorities are prohibited from making a charge for:

- a) Emergency medical assistance
  - b) Extinguishing fires or protecting life and property in the event of fires (except at or under the sea)
- 1) The Secretary of State may by order authorise a fire and rescue authority to charge a person of a specified description for any action of a specified description taken by the authority.
  - 4) The power in subsection (1) includes power to authorise a charge to be imposed on, or recovered from, a person other than the person in respect of whom action is taken by the authority.

**SPECIAL SERVICE CLASSIFICATIONS**

Special Service Calls for NYFRS are broken down into 3 classifications as follows:

**i. Emergency Special Service Calls (Attracts no charge)**

This would include calls which involve the saving of a life or emergency rescue operations which release, or assist in the release of, persons from life threatening or dangerous situations, and incidents of a humanitarian nature which promote human welfare or reduce suffering.

**Examples: (see appendix 1 for more details)**

- RTC/Transport Rescue
- Rescue from Machinery
- Rescue from Height
- Water Rescue
- Incidents involving Hazardous Materials
- Rescue from property/structures
- FRS is required for emergency medical assistance as stated at Section 2.2 and in accordance with Section 18B(2) of the Act.

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**ii. Non-Emergency Special Service Calls** (Attracts no charge)

This may include calls of a humanitarian, non-emergency nature and where the aim is to protect and support public safety and wellbeing. This may include facilitating other emergency services with the execution of their duties through the provision of crewing, equipment and specialist skills, where no viable alternatives are possible.

**Examples: (see appendix 1 for more details)**

- Body Recovery (not in sub surface water)
- Animal Rescue
- Lift Rescue
- Providing assistance or access for other emergency services
- Wide Scale Flooding
- Making safe unstable structures

**iii. Non-Emergency or Non/Humanitarian Special Service Calls** (May attract a charge)

This includes calls for assistance of a nature and where the requester could obtain a similar service from an alternative provider.

**Examples: (see appendix 1 for more details)**

- Entry into a property
- Service to the HM Coroner or Undertaker for a deceased body removal
- Domestic flooding (not due to weather)
- Provision of Water Supplies (not for human consumption)
- Assistance with pre - arranged special events, media productions etc.
- Sheeting of roofs as temporarily repairs
- Provision of equipment
- Living persons whose condition is not classified as a medical emergency but are physically unable to assist themselves. This could include but is not limited to, mobilisations to residential care homes or assistance with patient transfers.

**MOBILISATION**

- i. For **emergency special service calls**, Control will mobilise resources immediately on receipt of the call.
- ii. For some non-emergency special service calls, Control may consider mobilising an FDS Officer to appraise the incident prior to other resources being mobilised. The FDS Officer will consider if FRS resources would be of value, length of time likely to be deployed, crew safety and if suitable alternatives would be possible.
- iii. For **non-emergency, non/humanitarian special service calls**, Control will make the caller aware that a charge may be levied for services provided. For these types of calls, an FDS Officer will be mobilised to appraise the incident prior to other FRS resources being mobilised and to consider if charges should be applied. If FRS resources are considered suitable for use and if charges are considered appropriate, the FDS will discuss the pricing structure with the caller/occupier prior to resource mobilisations. Mobilisation of resources will be subject to the maintenance to overall fire cover provision.

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### **CHARGEABLE SPECIAL SERVICE CALLS**

Requests made for the loan or hire of equipment and Services will be directed via Control to the Duty Tactical Officer.

No chargeable special service should be undertaken which is likely to cause disproportionate risks to Fire Service personnel and in all cases an Analytical Risk Assessment (ARA) must be undertaken

Prior to commencement of work, a form FIRE/3 must be completed for all non-emergency, non/humanitarian special service calls deemed appropriate for charges. The pricing structure will be discussed and a signature gained from the person receiving the service. The completed form must be forwarded to the Response and Resilience Section along with rationale of why charges should be applied.

### **Appendix 1 GUIDANCE ON SPECIFIC SPECIAL SERVICES**

This information is indented to provide guidance on a range of Special Service Calls which NYFRS may mobilise an operational response. The range of incidents are examples and not an exhaustive list. **The response may be delayed if the request does not require an emergency response.**

#### **Body Recovery**

Body recovery from an incident is the responsibility of the Police, however it is recognised that NYFRS may be called upon to assist other agencies through the provision of specialist equipment, skills and PPE.

Crews may be mobilised to incidents which are initially classed as persons reported. If crews arrive at the scene of an incident and it becomes apparent that the person involved is deceased, the incident should turn from a rescue situation to a possible crime scene and the Police should be notified if not already in attendance. It is normal practice to leave a body in the position it was found and to only move it under instruction from the Police following their investigations. However, there are circumstances where it is the interest of public safety and wellbeing to consider recovery of a body without the authority of the Police e.g., a body floating in moving water and in danger of being washed downstream, a body at risk of contamination by a moving hazardous substance, a body in full view of large numbers of members of the public. In all circumstances the OIC should firstly consider alternatives to moving the body e.g., tying off, shielding etc. and where possible should consider taking photographs prior to removal.

Where crews are called by another emergency service specifically for the purpose of assisting with body recovery, the OIC should ensure that an ARA is completed to consider suitable safe systems of work including appropriate PPE. Where it is deemed that a body recovery is unachievable or inappropriate e.g., a body submerged under water with no knowledge of the whereabouts, then the OIC should liaise with the other Emergency Services to consider alternatives.

A charge may be levied when the assistance of the FRS is to provide a service to the HM Coroner or Undertaker for a deceased body removal.

For all incidents of body recovery, an FDS should be mobilised.

#### **Animal Rescue**

NYFRS are mobilised to a range of incident involving animals in need of rescue.

#### **Small animals i.e. Birds, Cats etc.**

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It is normal practice only to respond to these types of incident upon the request of the RSPCA. There are however occasions where the RSPCA are unable to attend and depending upon the circumstances it may be deemed appropriate to mobilise resources. In these circumstances Control should consider mobilising an FDS officer to attend and appraise the incident, taking into consideration the options to perform a rescue, possible stress to the public and crew safety. There will not normally be a charge for this type of incident.

**Medium, large animals i.e. Dogs, Cattle etc.**

For incidents requiring the rescue of medium and large animals, Control may consider mobilising an appropriate level of response and an FDS officer, without the involvement of the RSPCA. Where possible a Vet should be requested to attend via the animal owner or Police. Crews should undertake an ARA and consider safe systems of work and appropriate PPE. There will not normally be a charge for this type of incident.

**Lift Rescues**

It is the responsibility of the lift operator/owner to ensure procedures are in place for the release of people from lifts, however NYFRS will on occasions be called upon to assist with this type of incident. Where multiple calls are received to the same premises, and the owner/occupier fails to take remedial action, NYFRS may decide not to attend. There will not normally be a charge for this type of incident.

**Providing assistance or access for other emergency services**

**Provision of Water**

**Use of Water for Special Services**

When it is necessary to take water from public hydrants in connection with special services, prior permission must be obtained from the relevant water company by the person requesting the service, who will be responsible for the settlement of any consequent account rendered. The enableNY Senior Estates Officer must also be informed. The water company will be informed in writing by the Senior Estates Officer of an estimate of the quantity of water taken. The following information must, therefore be added to form FIRE/3.

- (a) The name of the appropriate water authority.
- (b) An approximation of the total quantity of mains water taken.

**Supply of Drinking Water**

Drinking water for human consumption will not be supplied unless required to do so by the relevant water company, local government or government authority. If requested by the water company to supply water for human consumption, the water company will be informed that the PFCCFRA cannot guarantee and accepts no responsibility for the purity of the water delivered.

**Supply of Non-Drinking Water**

If, however, it is quite clearly stated that the water is not required for human consumption but for other domestic use and the person requiring the service has obtained the approval of the Environment Agency or the relevant water company, a record of the amount of water used should be kept and the Environment Agency/water company informed after the completion of the service.

It will be made clear to the persons making the request that water supplied for domestic use of this nature will not, under any circumstances, be delivered into domestic water systems or wells from which drinking water might conceivably be obtained. Form FIRE/3 will be completed and signed to this effect.

**Supplies of Water for Farm Animals**

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Callers requesting supplies of water for farm animals will, in the first instance, be recommended to ask for assistance from the National Farmers Union (NFU). In the exceptional event that the NFU, the relevant water company or the Environment Agency are unable to assist, approval will be given by the Duty Officer subject to operational commitments. The person requiring the service must obtain the approval of the Environment Agency or the relevant water company.

Before an Officer arranges delivery of the water for the cattle, the applicant should be informed that no guarantee can be given as to the purity of the water to be delivered and will require the applicant to sign the Form of Application indemnifying the Fire Authority in this respect.

### **Persons locked in Lifts**

In the case of release from lifts, the person or company responsible for the maintenance of the lift will be responsible for any charges incurred, and not the person(s) locked in.

If Control receive a call reporting persons stuck in the lift, Control must advise the caller that this is a chargeable special service and the person responsible for the building will be charged. This applies whether the caller is stuck in the lift or not.

The name and address of the responsible person or company must therefore be obtained for including on Form FIRE/3. If a responsible person/company representative is not present or is unwilling to complete Form FIRE/3, the Incident Commander will undertake any actions necessary to release marooned persons and state clearly on Form FIRE/3 the reason for non-completion of Form FIRE/3.

### **Further Information**

Advice on the administration of the FIRE/3 form can be obtained from the Response and Resilience Section at BHQ. Out of hours contact should be made with Control who will arrange for the Duty Officer to contact the station.

Where a special service call is received to persons locked in or out of premises, Incident Commanders are to satisfy themselves that the person requiring entry is entitled to admittance. Among the factors they must have regard to include:

- The possibility that electrical or gas appliances have been left on inside the premises and could pose a fire hazard.
- Can the Fire Service action be justified (e.g., by the prevention of injury or distress?).
- Ownership can usually be established by questioning the person purporting to be the occupier, or by making enquiries of neighbours.
- Failure to render the Service will cause distress or danger to the applicant and/or the public.
- The possible training advantages for NYFRS personnel.
- Any Public Relations benefit.

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