

Special Service Calls Guidance



**WEST YORKSHIRE
FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE**



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1 Introduction

Section 19 of the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004 (The 2004 Act) allows the Secretary of State, following consultation, to set out by order the services for which a Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) may charge, and the persons who may be subject to that charge. These issues are further clarified by Statutory Instrument 2305.

The 2004 Act increases the number of statutory duties placed upon FRA's and widens the scope for the range of services that may attract a charge. However, FRA's are prohibited from making a charge for: -

- Extinguishing fires or protecting life and property in the event of fires (except at or under the sea)
- Emergency medical assistance

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

2 Levels of Response

2.1 Response to Emergency Special Service Calls

Any request to save life, to carry out rescue operations, or to prevent harm to persons, animals, or the environment will be responded to immediately with the appropriate attendance. A response will also be made to prevent serious property or financial loss where the service provided does not fall within the remit of other trades or organisations.

2.2 Response to Non-Emergency Special Service Calls

Other, less urgent services, falling within the scope of the 2004 Act, may be provided subject to the exigencies of the Service. A FDS Officer/Station Manager will normally be instructed to attend in the first instance to determine whether or not a response is appropriate. If a response is to be made the FDS Officer/Station Manager will assess the situation, determine the level of response, and inform Control for mobilisation purposes.

Control may use discretion to mobilise immediately without the prior attendance of an officer. The service would then be treated as an emergency.

Appliances mobilised to a non-emergency SSC should be driven at normal road speed without the use of visual or audible warning devices.

The IC should co-operate fully with other services present and take advice that may be available from specialists from other agencies.

Officers should familiarise themselves with Section 44 of the 2004 Act which relates to the 'powers of firefighters in an emergency etc.' Ultimately these powers will, in certain circumstances, extend to a SSC. This includes entering premises or vehicles by force where to do so would be in the public or environmental interest. In such cases powers

may also extend to closing a highway, stopping and regulating traffic, or restricting the access of persons to premises or places. However, where time allows, close liaison with the Police must be the normal course of action.

The IC's tactical plan may cause damage that is necessary to assist in a rescue. In such circumstances, where proportional and necessary damage is caused to property, the owner is unlikely to make a successful claim against WYFRS. However, they may have cause to seek compensation from the person rescued or owner of a rescued animal

3 Charging Policy

The overwhelming majority of SSC's will fall into one of two categories:

- Chargeable.
- Non-chargeable.

However, a charge will normally not be made where the service is:

- Of a humanitarian nature (i.e. the rescue or protection of persons and/or animals from danger) in an emergency situation. The only exception to this is the rescue Of a person(s) trapped in a defective lift car. This service will attract a charge.
- To give practical assistance to the community during periods of extreme environmental conditions (e.g. wide area flooding, tornados, etc.).
- Provided in response to a reasonable* request from a charitable organisation.
- Provided to make safe minor, non-commercial spills of petrol or diesel in a public place
- Provided in response to a reasonable* request from other emergency services.

*Reasonable - There will be occasions when requests are received where it would be more appropriate for another organisation to provide the service. Additionally, other requests may be received to perform a service that would take a disproportionate amount of time and/or physical resources to achieve. Operational exigencies of the Service must always be given priority and where there is any doubt as to what may constitute a 'reasonable' request; the First Call Officer should be contacted for further guidance.

4 Risk Assessment

When undertaking a SSC particularly in non-emergency situations or those involving animals, IC's must conduct a Dynamic Risk Assessment (DRA) and an Analytical Risk Assessment (ARA)

5 Operational Guidance

5.1 Road Traffic Collisions (RTC's)

The majority of RTC's are non-chargeable as they form part of WYFRS's core functions, however some may involve commercial vehicles carrying hazardous substances. In such cases it may be appropriate for the WYFRS to 'stand by' at the scene after performing any rescues, or assist in making the area safe. This latter stage of the incident is deemed to be chargeable.

5.2 Lift Rescues

The release of persons trapped inside a defective lift cabin is deemed to be a chargeable service. The charge will be issued to the owner(s) of the lift, or the occupier(s) of the building within which it is situated, where the owner does not occupy the property every effort should be made to determine his/her address.

Rescuing occupants of defective lift cars is a statutory duty for the FRS

A signature may be sought from the warden or person in charge of the building if available.

5.3 Incidents involving Bariatric Casualties

WYFRS will only attend when structural intervention and/or specialist techniques are required under the following circumstances:-

- At life-threatening incidents where specifically requested by YAS/HART/Police crews already in attendance.

Classed as humanitarian and treated as a non-chargeable SSC

Technical Rescue Officer (TRO) and the Technical Rescue Team (TRT) will be mobilised simultaneously.

YAS will be responsible for recovering costs of 'making good' and post incident security.

WYFRS have no statutory duty to provide assistance with deceased bariatric body recovery and will not normally be required to assist with:-

A TRO will be mobilised to authorise any attendance

5.4 Persons trapped in machinery

A SSC charge will not normally be made where the service is of a humanitarian nature

5.5 Lifting of incapacitated persons

The lifting of an incapacitated person in an emergency medical situation, or to prevent that person from coming to harm in the short term is a humanitarian, non-chargeable service.

5.6 Hazmat Incidents in public, private and commercial premises

Non-fire hazmat incidents a Special Service is subsequently provided, costs will be

recovered

If a responsible person is not available to provide a signature, the IC should annotate Form 701 accordingly and costs will be recovered on the basis of a statutory charge

5.7 Fuel Spills

Commercial spills of fuel in/on public, private or commercial premises are deemed to be a chargeable service and costs will be recovered

Non-commercial leaks of fuel in a public place will also be classed as an emergency and will not attract a charge.

5.8 Dealing with Fumes/Vapours/Gas Leaks

A Hazardous Materials Environmental Protection Officer (HMEPO) will normally attend to determine if the fumes or vapours are hazardous if so they will determine the response required and inform control.

This is deemed to be a chargeable service and costs will be recovered where possible. Often the source of fumes/vapours is traced to a location remote from where it was first reported. Where a definitive source of the contamination can be determined, the charges will be levied against the person or organisation responsible for the source. When the source cannot be located, no charges will be raised.

5.9 Rescue of Animals

Owner's details including name, address and signature must be obtained if the owner is in attendance for the completion of the Special Services Report Form FS 701 and 701A.

5.10 Domestic Flooding

Domestic flooding is a chargeable service and a signature must be obtained before the service is commenced. It should be noted that despite the extended powers afforded to operational personnel by the 2004 Act, dealing with this type of incident would not be for the wider benefit of the general public or environment. Therefore, the IC should request and await the arrival of, the Police before attempting any forced entry into a property where the owner is absent.

5.11 Persons Locked In/Out

Persons locked inside premises a humanitarian service will be non-chargeable

Non-emergency Access to a locked premise, Where such requests are clearly of a non-emergency nature they should be passed to the Police.

Provide access to locked premises in emergency circumstances.

The IC should carefully assess the situation to determine if an emergency situation does indeed exist. Not with standing this, the applicant must still be informed that this is a service, for which a charge may be made,

5.12 Calls to Dangerous Structures

Treated as a non-emergency, a FDS Officer will decide whether an attendance from WYFRS is necessary, or will advise the owner, occupier or Police of the action to be taken. Any action taken by WYFRS will be chargeable.

The responsibility of securing property and maintaining it in a safe condition rests with the owner. Provision is made in Section 58 of the Public Health Act 1936 for a Local Authority to take the appropriate action necessary to prevent danger to persons from buildings or structures. The Local Authority Building Control Surveyor will usually exercise such power.

5.13 Requests from West Yorkshire Police

Equipment requested by the Police will be made available subject to the operational exigencies of the Service

Equipment may be positioned by WYFRS personnel for use by WY Police personnel. Joint operations of this type involving both Emergency Services will be non-chargeable.

5.14 Use of Water for SSC's

When it is necessary to take water in connection with a SSC, the person requesting the service must obtain prior permission from the Environment Agency or the relevant water company. The permission must be obtained in writing and should state the quantity of water that may be taken. The IC must see this written permission prior to undertaking the service, which is chargeable. A record of the amount of water used will be maintained and the Environment Agency/water Company informed after the completion of the service

Whenever water is provided for the purpose of a SSC the attention of the applicant should be drawn to the conditions of acceptance on Form 701A, in particular,

Quote: 'The Fire and Rescue Service accepts no responsibility for the purity of water carried or supplied for domestic or other reasons.'

5.15 Polluted Water

Requests to pump polluted water are to be discouraged and must not be undertaken without prior approval of the First Call Officer unless, following a dynamic risk assessment, it is deemed necessary by the IC to take immediate action to prevent serious loss. On return to station the pump and associated equipment must be thoroughly cleaned and flushed through.

5.16 Recharging of BA Cylinders/Compressed Air Cylinders

All new requests for this type of service should be made to the First Call Officer, who will determine if the use of WYFRS resources is appropriate. The refilling of cylinders must always be performed on a chargeable basis. Under no circumstances should a cylinder be refilled where the applicant cannot provide a current and official hydrostatic pressure test certificate for the cylinder in question.

5.17 Special Service Requests Made Directly to Fire Stations

Requests for a non-emergency SSC that are made directly to a fire station may be accommodated, subject to operational exigencies. The type of service requested must be appropriate to the WYFRS and prior approval must be obtained from the First Call Officer before any undertaking is given to perform the service in question.

If approved, the service may only be provided subject to the prior completion of the Form of Application (701A).

Where it is apparent to the Station Manager/Watch Manager that an immediate turnout would enable serious loss to be averted, there will be no requirement to contact the First Call Officer. Control should be informed of an emergency SSC and be provided with the incident details.

6 Missing Persons

The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) definition of a missing person is:

“Anyone whose whereabouts are unknown whatever the circumstances of disappearance”. They will be considered missing until located and their well-being or otherwise established.

All WYFRS deployments to Missing Persons incidents will be classified as Special Service calls - non chargeable - assisting police. WYP will have overall command of all staff deployed at the incident.

WYFRS may make available, to WYP, personnel and equipment to conduct searches to locate missing persons following a request by the WYP Duty Inspector to do so. A NILO will ultimately sanction WYFRS resources to commit to the search operation. NILOs, TROs /SM/SC will give guidance regarding the type, number, and skill set of the WYFRS personnel required to attend the incident.

The appointed NILO should determine if the nature of the search request requires the attendance of a TRO or the nearest SM/SC. A TRO will only be required if the nature of the search involves water, line or technical rescue resources to be mobilised.

Resources can be recalled for routine operational fire cover at any time. WYFRS crews will be supervised by a Technical Rescue Officer (TRO) or SM/SC if the search is of a non-technical nature (water, line or technical rescue)

The WYFRS will support WYP with resource requests to search for missing persons that are categorised medium risk, high risk or in exceptional cases low risk with special requirements.

6.1 Risk Categorisation of Missing Persons

High Risk	
The risk posed is immediate and there are substantial grounds for believing that the subject is in danger through their own vulnerability.	This category requires the immediate deployment of police resources and a member of the senior management team or similar command level to be involved in the examination of initial enquiry lines and approval of appropriate staffing levels. The WYP will manage the press/media strategy and/or the close contact and support with outside agencies.
Medium Risk	
The risk posed is likely to place subject in danger or they are a threat to themselves.	This category requires an active and measured response by police and other agencies in relation to tracing the missing person.
Low Risk	
There is no apparent threat of danger to either the subject or the public.	In addition to recording the information on the police national computer, the police will advise the person reporting the disappearance that following basic enquiries unless circumstances change, further enquiries will not be carried out by police, but the missing person's details will be passed to the National Missing Persons Helpline in line with the national protocol. However low risk missing persons must be kept under review as risk can increase with the passage of time.

6.2 Hazards and Risks

6.3 WYFRS personnel assaulted by the missing person

Any potential for this type of behaviour to occur will be identified at the initial scoping stage between WYP and a Duty NILO. WYFRS personnel will not be exposed to dangerous or violent individuals that present a danger to the public. Searching for this type of high risk missing person will be a WYP matter.

6.4 Falls from height

Search operations on steep slopes, embankments, quarries, scaffolding or other working at height structures would pose a serious threat to WYFRS personnel. This type of search activity will be risk assessed by the on scene TRO and specialist crews will be requested when appropriate.

6.5 Falls in to water

Search operations may take place in and around water, ponds, lakes, rivers and canals. The TRO will risk assess specific tasks and request specialist crews when appropriate to reduce the risk to WYFRS personnel.

6.6 Unsafe structures, buildings or confined spaces

Various structures or buildings in different states of repair may require searching; this type of search activity can present numerous potential hazards. The on-scene TRO should risk assess any areas of concern and consider utilising specialist personnel and equipment.

6.7 Exhaustion

The TRO will continually monitor the work rate of WYFRS personnel at the search scene

6.8 Extreme Weather Conditions

When practical the Duty NILO in conjunction with the on scene TRO should obtain an accurate weather forecast. This forecast can assist with preplanning welfare and relief arrangements.

6.9 Slips Trips and falls on Uneven Ground

The search terrain will vary enormously, lighting and weather conditions will also have a serious impact on the likelihood of WYFRS personnel tripping or falling. All WYFRS personnel should continuously monitor the conditions around them to reduce any likelihood of suffering this type of minor accident.

6.10 Confined spaces

Confined spaces present a serious hazard and unidentified atmospheric conditions. They should not be entered without robust command and control procedures being established, breathing apparatus, gas detection, access/egress issues, exit strategy and safety crews must all be established prior to any deployment of personnel in to a confined space forming part of a missing persons search scenario

6.11 TRO SM/SC responsibilities

The designated TRO/SM/SC should proceed to the search location as soon as practical and make contact with the Senior Investigating Officer [SIO] and the on-site Police Search Advisor (POLSA). The TRO/SM/SC can then make a more detailed assessment of resources and skill sets required at the search site.

Protracted deployments will require detailed handing over forms and a continuous decision log to assist oncoming relief crews, the TRO/SM/SC should consider appointing a protracted incident coordinator when appropriate.

WYFRS supervisors on site will ensure that any health and safety issues for their staff are recognised and addressed by completing an Analytical Risk Assessment (ARA) prior to any rescue operations commencing.

6.12 Crews Responsibilities

WYP will brief all WYFRS personnel regarding the nature of the incident, the purpose of the search, the duties required of them, actions to be taken on discovering evidence, welfare considerations, lines of communication and debrief / relief arrangements.

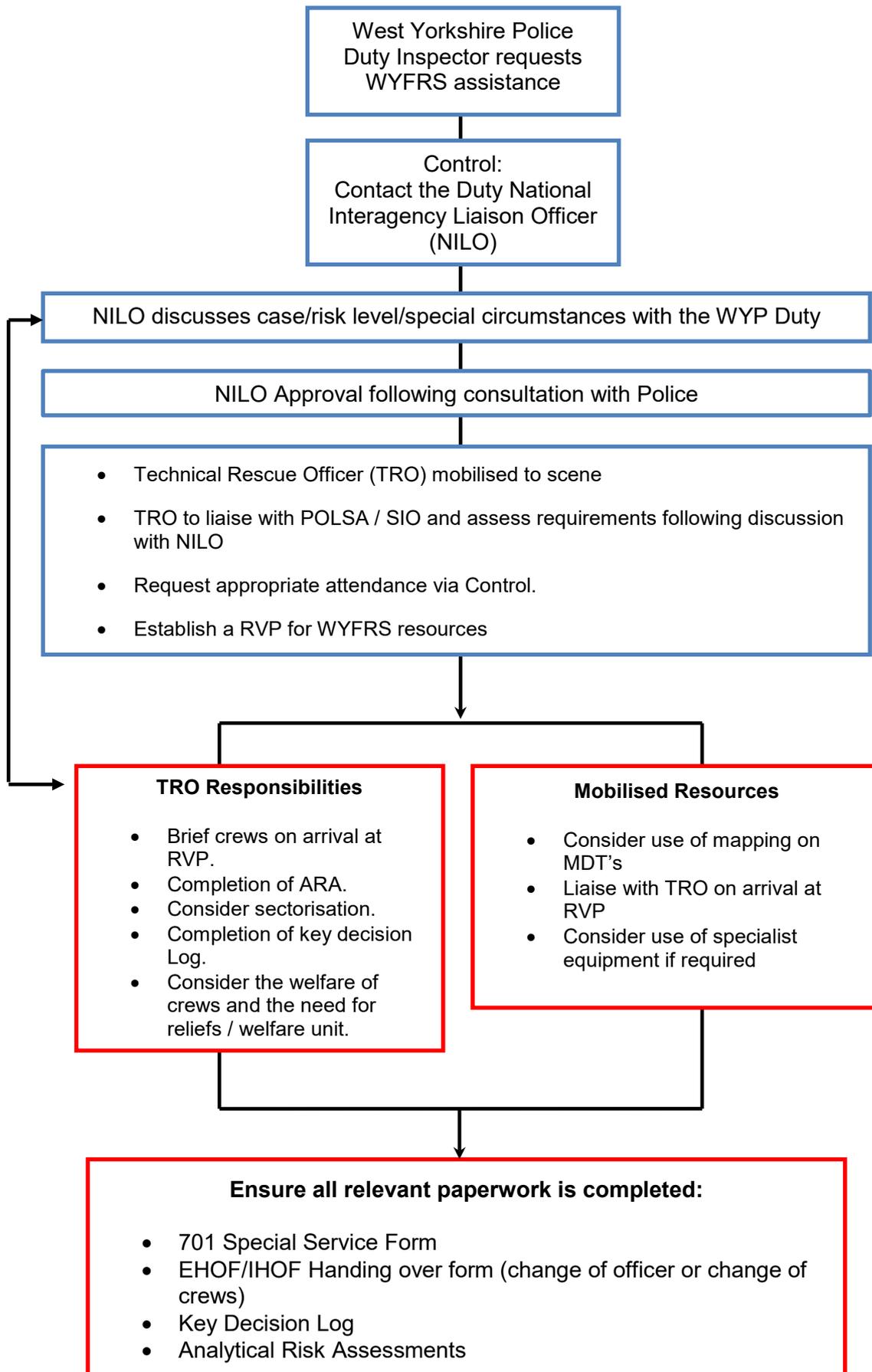
WYFRS personnel will continue to remain in contact with Control who will maintain an on-going log of their deployment including scheduled dynamic risk assessment reviews in line with the incident command system. Control logs will be made available to WYP if required.

WYFRS personnel will provide witness statements when requested and act as witnesses in any subsequent criminal proceedings if required. Witness statements should only be given to WYP when the individual giving the statement is accompanied by a Station Manager. WYFRS clothing or PPE items will be provided to WYP if required for forensic or other investigative purposes in connection with any criminal investigation.

6.13 Media

All media issues in connection with any missing person enquiry will be managed by WYP. WYFRS personnel will not disclose any confidential information in connection with any joint WYP operation.

6.14 Missing Person Protocol Flow chart



7 Post Incident SSC

7.1 SSC Forms

Forms 701, 701A and [701B](#) will be carried on all appliances and kept at all stations. Wherever possible, a signature must be obtained on Form 701A prior to the performing of the service. This must always be the case for a non-emergency SSC. At an emergency, where a signature is unobtainable, the IC should make a suitable comment on Form 701. Form 701 to be completed on all occasions when a service is provided except RTC's (other than those involving clearance of hazardous substances). Where "services are not required" - do not submit Form 701.

Form 701A is a pre-carbonated sheet in duplicate. In all circumstances where a signature is requested on Form 701A, the applicant must be informed that a charge will be made for the services provided before they sign the form and before any action is taken by WYFRS. The top copy is handed to the applicant after they have signed it, and the bottom copy is attached to Form 701.

Whenever an applicant signs Form 701A they must also be provided with a Scale of Charges ([Form 701B located in Library/Forms](#)) and guidance given where appropriate. With the exception of the circumstances listed below, the completed paperwork is to be forwarded via the Station Manager, to the Finance Section at WYFRS headquarters.

7.2 Emergency SSC's

Emergency SSC's will usually fall into either the chargeable or the non-chargeable category; although there may occasionally be a combination of both (see Appendix B). The IC will always deal with an emergency situation immediately, even where the service provided is of a chargeable nature (e.g. Chemical spillage on public highway).

7.3 SSC's performed in the public and/or environmental interest

SSC's of this type are performed in the public and/or environmental interest, which, from a legal standpoint, allows a WYFRS to make a statutory charge, irrespective of any request to carry out the service by an owner/occupier, etc. Even though a signature will not be required at such incidents, the IC should make every effort to obtain one after the incident and/or provide as much information as possible on Form 701. This will help determine who is responsible for payment and therefore assist in cost recovery.

7.4 Non-emergency SSC's

The vast majority of non-emergency SSC's are performed at the request of an individual or organisation (e.g. domestic flooding.) In such cases the established procedure of obtaining a signature on form 701A from the applicant should be followed, where by the signature forms the basis of a consensual arrangement and the paperwork is effectively recording the agreement in the event of a later dispute. For a non-emergency SSC a signature must always be obtained from the applicant in advance of the service being provided.

There may be occasions where, on arrival at a SSC that has been requested on a non-emergency basis, the IC determines that the service required needs to be performed

immediately in the public or environmental interest. In these circumstances the service will be treated as an emergency SSC. Where the incident takes place on private property personnel must familiarise themselves with Section 44 of the Fire Services act) in case they experience any difficulty in gaining access to the scene.

7.5 Someone without a permanent, local, address

On occasion, a request may be received from someone without a permanent, local, address: e.g. travelling show people, circus, etc. In such instances the applicant or representative of the organisation requesting the service must, in addition to signing Form 701A provide an official order in writing detailing the full address of their registered office.

7.6 Mitigating circumstances

Occasionally, a service is provided that would normally attract a charge where the IC may be of the opinion that, due to 'mitigating circumstances', the charges should be waived. Under no circumstances should any undertaking be given to the applicant regarding the possibility of a charge not being made.

A signature must still be obtained on form 701A and the IC should indicate clearly on Form 701 the reason for making the recommendation to waive the charge.

The form, suitably annotated by the respective Station Manager, should then be forwarded to the District Group Manager. This is the only occasion when Form 701 should be sent for consideration to line GM. On all other occasions, the completed Form 701 should be forwarded directly to the Finance Section at WYFRS headquarters.

7.7 Missing Persons

At the conclusion of any missing persons deployment WYP will be responsible for conducting a debrief with WYFRS personnel and ensuring that any learning outcomes regarding the deployment are identified, documented and discussed.

WYFRS personnel will provide witness statements when requested and act as witnesses in any subsequent criminal proceedings if required. Witness statements should only be given to WYP when the individual giving the statement is accompanied by a Station Manager. WYFRS clothing or PPE items will be provided to WYP if required for forensic or other investigative purposes in connection with any criminal investigation.

The IRS should be recorded as:

- Assisting other agencies
- Other assistance to Police / Ambulance
- Give details of the actual search completed

8 Guidance on Charging Policy for Common Special Services

Example of action taken by fire and rescue authority	Chargeable or Non-chargeable?	Person(s) who may be charged
Containment and clearance of debris, spillages, discharges or leaks from a vehicle, storage tank or pipe other than petrol or diesel (see below).	Chargeable.	The owner, occupier or operator of any premises or vehicle which, prior to the incident giving rise to the charge, contained or conveyed the material to be contained or cleared, or the person who requests the service or to whom the service is provided.
Dealing with hazardous vapours or contamination caused by spillages/leakages where the contamination or leak is remote from where the vapours are reported.	Non-chargeable where the source of the vapours cannot be identified. Chargeable where the source is definitively identified.	Not applicable. The owner, occupier or operator of any premises or equipment identified as the source of the spill or leak.
Road traffic collision involving chemical tanker where driver of tanker is trapped. Driver is released, but crews then 'stand by' for safety reasons during clean-up operations by commercial contractor.	The time spent and the physical resources/equipment used in releasing the driver are non-chargeable (humanitarian). The time spent and the physical resources/equipment used in 'standing by' are chargeable.	The owner, occupier or operator of any premises or vehicle which, prior to the incident giving rise to the charge, contained or conveyed the material to be contained or cleared, or the person who requests the service or to whom the service is provided.
Road traffic collisions – rescue of trapped person(s) or attendance due to serious threat of fire	Non-chargeable.	Not applicable.
'Making Safe' or removal of dangerous structures (e.g. unstable, domestic chimney stack).	Chargeable.	The owner, occupier or operator of the structure or premises where the structure is located, or the person who requests the service or to whom the service is provided.

Dealing with petrol/diesel spillages/leaks etc. from vehicles or machinery where the petrol/diesel leaking was being carried for commercial reasons (e.g. leakage from bulk tank of commercial tanker, or spillage from tanker or pump on filling station forecourt).	Chargeable.	The owner, occupier or operator of any premises or vehicle which, prior to the incident giving rise to the charge, contained or conveyed the material to be contained or cleared, or the person who requests the service or to whom the service is provided.
Provision or removal of water (including domestic premises).	Chargeable.	The owner, occupier or operator of any premises in relation to which the service is provided, or the person who requests the service or to whom the service is provided.
Effecting entry to premises (including domestic premises) other than in emergency circumstances (e.g. chip pan left on cooker).	Chargeable (where IC assesses that no emergency is evident).	The owner, occupier or operator of any premises, or the person who requests the service or to whom the service is provided.
Effecting egress for person(s) locked inside premises (other than lift cabins – see above).	Non-chargeable.	Not applicable.
Rescuing animals in danger.	Non-chargeable.	Not applicable.
Rescuing persons from dangerous structures (e.g. collapsed scaffolding).	Non-chargeable.	Not applicable.
Providing practical assistance to the community during extreme environmental conditions (e.g. wide area flooding, tornados, etc.).	Non-chargeable.	Not applicable.
Minor, non-commercial fuel spillages in a public place (e.g. petrol or diesel leaking from the fuel tank of a private car on public highway).	Non-chargeable.	Not applicable.