

Best practice assessments

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Responsible work team:	Central Operations

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Key point summary

Foreword

- This policy helps station-based operational staff use best practice assessments (BPAs).
- It defines the policy that underpins the development and management of all BPAs.
- It details the process for developing new or revising existing BPAs.
- It defines the process for incorporating BPAs into new training interventions.
- It explains the guidance and support available to staff carrying out BPAs.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This policy helps staff use BPAs. It also defines the policy behind the development and management of all BPAs and explains the process for incorporating BPAs into new training interventions.

2 Background

- 2.1 A number of policies available on hotwire have assessor review sheets attached. These sheets allow staff to be assessed against a series of pre-defined activities and act as an aide-memoire to help managers apply a consistent assessment and evaluation process. The sheets have become known as BPAs.
- 2.2 BPAs have been developed for risk-critical activities, when staff must carry out a prescribed set of evolutions or tasks. They are completed in the correct sequence detailed to show the application of knowledge and understanding.
- 2.3 BPAs are currently organised into two groups:
 - Group one – core BPAs. Available in the Station Diary, see Appendix 1.
 - Group two – training support BPAs. Available in the Station Diary, see Appendix 2.

3 Core best practice assessments

- 3.1 There are several training interventions that need periodic BPAs (see Appendix 1). These BPAs reflect high risk activities so require regular reviews.
- 3.2 The Station Diary highlights the next due date when BPAs must be carried out for individual watch based operational staff. These automatically appear in the watch work queue to remind watch officers that they must carry out these periodic assessments.
- 3.3 The frequency of periodic BPAs is based on a risk assessment determined by organisational need.
- 3.4 Although the core BPA review periods are pre-defined, they can also be used to support individual or team development needs. The identified development may follow a training needs analysis (TNA) or may result from a training requirement identified through the Borough/Watch Training Plan.
- 3.5 When carrying out a BPA, managers must be satisfied that the individual assessed can perform the task to the required standard. This is achieved by following the logical step-by-step process of:
 - Planning
 - gathering evidence
 - providing feedback
 - making an assessment decision

- agreeing an action plan (where appropriate)
- recording the outcome of the assessment.

3.6 The results of the assessments for all core BPAs are recorded in the Station Diary.

4 Training support best practice assessments

- 4.1 In addition to the core BPAs, a number of training support BPAs are available (see appendix 2). These can be used in the same way as the core BPAs to support the assessment and development of staff (as defined in paragraphs 3.4 and 3.5 above). Training support BPAs are not highlighted in the Station Diary work queue as a periodic reminder.
- 4.2 The training support BPAs are available through the Station Diary within the BPA appointment type. They can be used by managers carrying out a staff or team assessment.
- 4.3 The training support BPAs can also be used to assess an individual's ability to carry out a specific task or activity to the required standard. This is achieved by following the logical step-by-step process of:
- Planning;
 - gathering evidence;
 - providing feedback;
 - making an assessment decision;
 - agreeing an action plan (where appropriate);
 - recording the outcome of the assessment.
- 4.4 The results of the assessments for all training support BPAs are recorded in the Station Diary.

5 Developing new BPAs – responding to organisational risk

- 5.1 Using BPAs is driven by risk assessments already carried out within the Brigade. For example, the risk matrix for operational equipment or provision of training. This approach makes sure the Brigade has a sustainable number of core BPAs that complement and support the wider staff training requirement. It also provides greater managerial flexibility for adding and removing core BPAs as organisational risks change over time.
- 5.2 Using this risk-based approach produces BPAs that respond to issues and concerns that arise from the Dynamic and Intelligent Operational Training (DIOT) process.
- 5.3 Applying the DIOT process makes sure the core BPA list is reviewed on a regular basis. It also provides a process that allows core BPAs to be developed to support the training requirements associated with the Operational News bulletins.

6 Support and guidance

- 6.1 Requests for advice can be made to the RPE and Hazmat PPE mailbox and should be called 'BPA enquiry'. Hotwire guidance is also available.
- 6.2 Copies of existing BPAs can be found on hotwire under the associated policy i.e., Policy number 466 – Respiratory protective equipment - breathing apparatus – operational procedures.
- 6.3 The policy owner is responsible for the change management process used to maintain the accuracy and currency of all core BPAs and training aide-memoires.
- 6.4 General guidance for line managers who need support at stations during the assessment process is available from Learning Support and Management Advice. They can be contacted through Hotwire.

Appendix 1 - Core BPAs available in the Station Diary

- Breathing apparatus – Don, start, exchange of air and close down found in Appendix 2 of Policy number 466 - Respiratory protective equipment – breathing apparatus – operational procedures.
- Breathing apparatus – Guideline team leader found in list in Station Diary and Appendix 3 of Policy number 466 - Respiratory protective equipment – breathing apparatus – operational procedures.
- Entry control operative found in Appendix 4 of Policy number 466 – Respiratory protective equipment – breathing apparatus – operational procedures.

These are automatically highlighted in the Station Diary watch work queues as periodic reminders at a frequency of 180 days since the individual completed the last BPA.

Command Unit Use only:

- IRIS
- New CU Radio Communications
- CU DOT Matrix
- CU Headline Board and Timeline
- CU Heli Teli
- CU ICT
- CU Orientation
- CU Cameras

These are automatically highlighted in the Station Diary Work Queue for the relevant staff as periodic reminders at a frequency of 365 days since the individual completed the last BPA.

Command unit BPA's (pre-determined list of activities) can be accessed via SharePoint - (CU personnel only).

Recommended review schedule: it is recommended that core BPAs be brought forward on an annual basis to review currency, relevance and need.

CBRN Rapid Response Team use only:

- IdentiFINDER 2
- Drager Tubes
- Hapsite Smart (Plus)
- Hazmat ID 360
- GfG 460
- Ppb RAE 3000 PID
- Policy number 602 – Incidents involving ionising radiation
- Policy number 797 – Detection Identification and monitoring (DIM) instruments
- Forensic sampling
- LCD
- Bruker Raid
- Electra contamination mater

These are automatically highlighted in the Station Diary watch work queues for the relevant staff as periodic reminders at a frequency of six months once the individual completed the last BPA.

Appendix 2 - Training support BPAs available in the station diary

- A' test and 'B' test (Policy number 476 - Appendix 5 and 6).
- GTS Donning and disrobe (Policy number 502 - Appendix 6).
- Cable entanglement (Policy number 466 – Appendix 5).

These are not brought forward automatically in the Station Diary Work Queue as periodic reminders but are recorded through the relevant Station Diary appointments.

Dynamic risk assessment – No BPA has been created for this subject. Watch officers can find guidance within Policy number 985 - Operational safety management - knowledge skills and competence – NOG.

All personnel will also be required to familiarise themselves with Policy number 985 - Operational safety management - knowledge skills and competence – NOG.

Reminders to complete the Dynamic Risk Assessment training will be included in the Station Diary watch work queues at a frequency of 180 days.

Recommended review schedule: it is recommended that training support BPA's be brought forward on an annual basis to review currency, relevance and need.

Document history

Assessments

An equality, sustainability or health, safety and welfare impact assessment and/or a risk assessment was last completed on:

EIA	10/01/2024	SDIA	25/09/2023	HSWIA	25/09/2023	RA	NA
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Audit trail

Listed below is a brief audit trail, detailing amendments made to this policy/procedure.

Page/para nos.	Brief description of change	Date
Throughout	Policy reviewed as current. No changes made to content.	29/09/2011
Appendix 1	Removal of EDBA don & start and exchange of air.	23/02/2012
Appendix 2	Removal of Extended Duration Apparatus test.	02/03/2012
Throughout	Policy reviewed- removal of section 6 – Appendix 1 and 2 updated, New contact points/ mailbox added for new Section 6.	23/07/2012
Throughout	Policy reviewed as current. No changes made to content.	29/09/2011
Appendix 1	Addition of RRT BPAs.	05/06/2013
Page 5	Policy 482 has been removed and policies 602 and 797 have been added.	29/11/2013
Page 7	'Subjects list' table - template updated.	02/02/2015
Throughout	Minor changes made throughout due to the TMR.	09/10/2015
Throughout	Policy reviewed – removal of STEP and Client Group. Updated BPA's throughout.	06/08/2018
Page 5	Appendix 1 - CU Vector TCT and UPS Battery removed from CU BPA list.	17/08/2018
Page 6, Appendix 2	Hyperlink changed to policy number 342 and reference input to policy number 342.	28/08/2018
Throughout	Changes made to reflect the change in organisational terminology following Role to Rank.	15/10/2019
Throughout	Reference to Authority changed to Brigade.	07/09/2020
Appendix 2	Cross reference links updated.	30/08/2022
Throughout	Review as current and minor changes made	12/01/2024
Page 4	List of BPA's updated	15/01/2024
Throughout	Minor grammatical changes made.	08/04/2025

Subject list

You can find this policy under the following subjects.

BPA's	New developments
Training	

Freedom of Information Act exemptions

This policy/procedure has been securely marked due to:

Considered by: (responsible work team)	FOIA exemption	Security marking classification