

# EMERGENCY SERVICES INTEROPERABILITY SURVEY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NOVEMBER 2013



Report by

**SKILLS** for **JUSTICE**

*Developing skills for a safer and fairer society*

In partnership with



**JESIP**

JOINT EMERGENCY SERVICES  
INTEROPERABILITY PROGRAMME

*Working Together – Saving Lives*

## OVERVIEW

The Joint Emergency Services Interoperability Programme (JESIP) has been established to bring about changes at the operational level that lead to the emergency services working together more effectively at major incidents.

Skills for Justice has delivered this research project as part of the Employer Investment Fund (EIF). The EIF, managed by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills, stimulates employer investment in skills. This project is one of a wider programme of projects designed to inform the development of working across boundaries in the Justice and Community Safety sector.

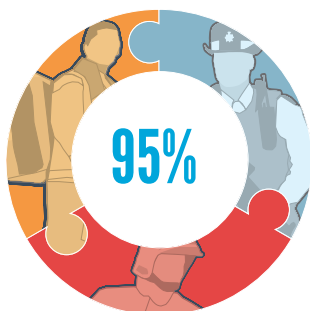
In 2012 Skills for Justice examined inquest reports from major incidents and identified recurring recommendations relating to interoperability between the emergency services. A survey of nearly 2000 employees from the emergency services builds upon our understanding of the barriers to interoperability and provides an evidence base that can support JESIP in developing interventions.

## KEY FINDINGS

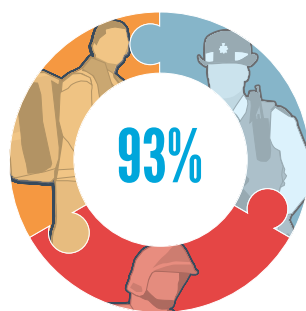
These findings provide a measure to compare progress against, following the conclusion of the JESIP workstreams:

- **95%** of respondents stated that a lack of joint training was a barrier to effective interoperable working
- **71%** of operational commanders have experienced joint training either never or less than every two years
- **75%** of respondents stated that joint debriefing from incidents happens either never or only sometimes
- **95%** of respondents thought that a move to a single joint decision making model would support interoperability
- **91%** of respondents stated that a lack of practices, protocols, training and exercising was the most significant barrier to effective sharing of information of the options included
- **62%** of respondents considered the lack of knowledge regarding each other's approach was the most significant barrier to conducting successful joint assessment of risk
- **93%** of respondents stated that a lack of joint exercising was a barrier to effective interoperable working

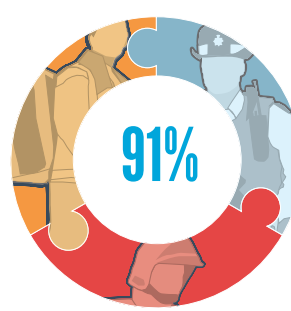
## BARRIERS WITH A MAJOR IMPACT ON INTEROPERABILITY



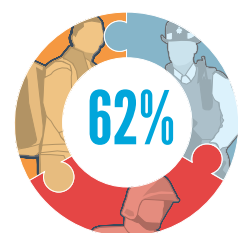
Lack of joint training



Lack of joint exercising



Lack of emphasis on interoperability



Inability to share information and intelligence

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Following analysis of the survey findings, the report makes the following recommendations:

- 1. Joint training and exercising** is consistently identified as the most important factor in the effectiveness of interoperability. Nationally developed and funded joint training should be provided for responders, particularly those working at an operational level.
- 2. An awareness of the role**, approach and requirements of other services is a basic requirement of all interoperability principles and this knowledge should be considered a key training standard.
- 3. Joint training and exercising** will be most beneficial where it provides personal contact with responders from other services and includes practical elements that allow assumptions and equipment to be tested.
- 4. Training** does not guarantee that initiatives will become established in the emergency response. initiatives that compete with intuitive, ingrained alternatives are easily abandoned under the pressure of the emergency response. Initiatives must address a real need, be simple, reliable and build on processes that are familiar from routine operations. If initiatives are not consistently used knowledge attrition will occur.
- 5. Organisational and cultural attitudes** that reject joint working should not be a source of excessive concern. A lack of trust or willingness to work together is consistently rated as the least significant barrier to interoperability of those included in this survey.
- 6. A national interactive collaboration tool** could be developed. This would be aimed at supporting the development of collaborative learning programmes to ensure that the needs of the three emergency services are met.
- 7. Responsibility** for the procurement of communications technology sits with local organisations. National procurement or funding would be more cost effective and would increase standardisation. Compatibility of equipment makes communications protocols more efficient, reliable and resilient.
- 8. The survey results** will help to ensure that the experiences and opinions of the emergency service workforce are taken into account when designing initiatives. However, people do not always behave in the way they predict they will. An important step in developing interventions is evaluating their effectiveness in eliciting behaviour change in responders.

# FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you would like to read the full report you can download a copy from the Skills for Justice website

[www.sfjuk.com](http://www.sfjuk.com)

Skills for Justice is part of JSSC group, which is an independent, employer-led charity enabling employers and employees across the world to develop skills for success.

JSSC group is the Sector Skills Council (SSC) for the UK justice, frontline services and professional services sectors.

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