Fatality Guidance Manual

Force Department: TP & Crime Dept FHQ
Sponsor: Ch Supt Miles Flood
ACPO Sponsor: ACC Pacey
Origin/Author: T/Ci Tom Naughton & Ci Nicholas Barker
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# Fatality Guidance Manual

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Released under the Freedom of Information Act
1. Introduction

1.1 This Guidance Manual relates to all fatalities occurring on the national rail network including the London Underground System, Docklands Light Railway, the Midland Metro, Croydon Tramlink, Eurostar, Tyne and Wear Metro and the Glasgow Subway.

1.2 For the purpose of this Manual deaths specifically relate to fatalities on the railway including persons struck by trains, people found deceased at stations and on railway premises and incorporates procedures from the Murder Investigation Manual (MIM).

1.3 This Guidance also relates to workplace deaths, sudden deaths and incidents where a person dies in hospital or in the ambulance as a direct result of an incident on the railway.

1.4 The purpose of this Manual of Guidance is to provide officers with guidance and support to ensure that they are given the freedom to make properly rationalised decisions whilst dealing with any fatality in a professional and appropriate manner.

1.5 Whilst investigating the untimely death of someone will always be one of the most important duties of a police officer it must be recognised that the impact of our actions can cause major disruption and potential harm to large numbers of the public travelling on the rail network.

1.6 Due to the geographic nature of the work of British Transport Police (BTP) any incident causing a blockage of the line can very quickly have an impact many miles away. This has the potential to cause harm and discomfort to members of the public from being stuck on trains, putting themselves at risk by detaining onto the live network and cause major disruption to lives.

1.7 The Guidance has been collated from examples of identified 'best practice' across the Force and is written to reflect the following strategic priorities:

- Preservation of life of persons involved in incidents
- Ensure the respect and dignity of the deceased
- Maximise the safety of the public affected by the fatality and minimise the risk to BTP and rail staff dealing with the incident
- Ensure that BTP staff are able to respond professionally and effectively to all categories of Fatal Incidents
- Work with industry partners to significantly reduce disruption on the railway network
- Increase community and customer confidence in the BTP
- Carry out a professional and diligent investigation
- Provide BTP with an effective decision making process.

1.8 This Guidance Manual is not intended to be directive but is designed to support all BTP staff. There may be occasions where recommendations within the Guidance Manual are not utilised or decisions are made outside the guidance.

1.9 However, where there is evidence of decision making, through the National Decision Model, in good faith and where justification is recorded then the organisation will seek to support all staff. Nothing in this manual is intended to restrict BTP staff from taking innovative action to effectively resolve incidents in ways which are not included in this Guidance document.
2. Applying the National Decision Model to Fatality Management

2.1 In fatality incidents, the relevant BTP response and specialist resources are deployed and directed by available information and an assessment of the incident. Police officers have a positive duty to preserve life, protect the public from harm and provide a duty of care to all involved. The nature and urgency of the police action will take into account public safety as well as the skills and capability of officers available.

2.2 To assist the BTP and other Police Forces in their approach to professionally deal with incidents, ACPO has developed a model which is designed to assist operational officers, planners, advisors, Incident Managers and commanders to manage their response to a situation in a reasonable and proportionate way.

2.3 The National Decision Model (NDM) is a decision making model that is used throughout the Police Service. The NDM is a Scalable model that can be applied before, during and after a fatality incident. The NDM provides a framework for recording command decisions and the rationale behind them and can also be used as a briefing tool for officers attending incidents.

2.4 The NDM is driven by information and intelligence. It is a continuous cycle, constantly reviewed in light of new information and assessment that will, ultimately, affect the response to the incident. The NDM will also assist in determining the incident classification.

2.5 All fatalities should be properly managed and investigated by staff at the appropriate level and experience from the moment the call is received until the Inquest into the death is heard with the NDM being used continuously. This will ensure a professional and diligent investigation process during each stage; the initial enquiries, body removal, post area searches, further investigation, liaison with the next of kin, community and coroner liaison and inquest file completion.

2.6 Each part of the NDM is intended to provide the user with an area for focus and consideration. It is essential that officers undertaking both Incident Command and supervisory roles and use their professional knowledge, skills and experience which they have developed across their police service and life experience.

2.7 The model can assist in the decision-making process and provides a structure for the documentation of decisions and supporting rationale. Such documentation should be made on Command & Control logs, decision and scene logs and where appropriate Pocket Notebooks (PNBs).

2.8 The cyclical nature of the model indicates the necessity for a sequential process of continual reassessment. The model prompts the decision maker to take action on the basis of the most up-to-date information and intelligence available at that time.
3. **Classifications**

3.1 There are various classifications of a fatality that can be considered following the Pre-Classification Assessment Process.

3.2 **Pre-Classification Assessment Process**
This stage involves the commencement of initial enquiries and activities to identify the appropriate classification. A reasonable time period should be allowed to carry out tasks and identify the correct classification whilst utilising the National Decision Model (NDM). It is accepted that on occasions there will be no alternative but classify as unexplained until the initial actions have been exhausted. (Section 5)

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<th>Classification</th>
<th>Guidance &amp; Statements of Classification</th>
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<tr>
<td>Suspicious</td>
<td>Where there exists evidence of third party involvement in the unlawful killing of the deceased or where the cause of death is not immediately apparent and the circumstances indicate the involvement of a third party or where there are circumstances that cause concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non Suspicious</td>
<td>Where from the readily available evidence, the death is in the opinion of the officer dealing, clearly not suspicious or unexplained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unexplained</td>
<td>A fatality for which there is no immediate explanation as to the cause of death and there is no available information or intelligence to confirm that the death is either suspicious or non-suspicious.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Related Deaths</td>
<td>'A work related death is a fatality resulting from an incident arising out of, or in connection with work'.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In any reports of work related fatalities there will need to be an early assessment as to whether the death is sudden or as a result of complications in the workplace.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sudden Death</td>
<td>When a death is reported to BTP, which is not suspicious and does not involve an unnatural occurrence (e.g. person under train/murder/work related/unexplained) it should be regarded as an apparent sudden death (e.g. death through illness on a train platform or concourse).</td>
</tr>
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3.3 The tactical actions and guidance in Section 5 should be applied where relevant and assist the Incident Commander in determining a classification. All efforts should be made within a reasonable timeframe to ascertain whether the incident is suspicious or non-suspicious with consideration to the golden hour principles.

3.4 It is accepted that there will be circumstances where the initial fast time enquiries cannot determine whether the incident is suspicious or non-suspicious. In these circumstances the incident should be declared unexplained. However, a regular review within a reasonable timeframe should be utilised, including the use of (NDM). In these circumstances, Section 5 should also continue as fast time actions and be reviewed by the initial Incident Commander.
4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 There are key staff who will provide an immediate response to fatality incidents from the outset. Their role will be to both ascertain what has occurred and to ensure the response to the incident is professional and effective. Below is a chart of officers who will commonly deal with fatalities and their responsibilities.

<table>
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<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Force Control Room Operators</strong></td>
<td>FCR operators should ensure activities are carried out that will ensure a prompt and effective response to the incident.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Force Control Room Duty Officer (Inspector Rank)</strong></td>
<td>The FCR duty officer should ensure actions of FCR Operators are being carried out and liaise with the HM Coroner/Procurator Fiscal. They should also ensure that the relevant responses from all resources are effective and that dynamic decisions are made to ensure the respect and dignity of the deceased whilst prompting logistics to prevent disruption. Notifying on call officers is also a priority where appropriate as is liaison with the Railway industry. The Role will often require initial Incident Command prior to the classification stage and also during both Non Suspicious and Unexplained fatalities. The FCR Duty Officer will initially classify an Incident and record the time and rationale for the decision including supporting evidence. They will perform the role of Incident Commander until handing over command to an officer who is better placed to direct the operation. On occasions, during unexplained fatalities, the FCR DO will retain Incident command but they will have the option to seek supporting advice from the FHQ Senior Detective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Force Control Room Sergeant Rank</strong></td>
<td>The FCR Duty Sgt should depultise for the FCR Duty Officer in carrying out the above actions where appropriate. They should also assist with resourcing and dealing with the incident where appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Officers Attending the Scene</strong></td>
<td>The attending officers should preserve life, carry out an initial scene assessment and establish a dialogue with the railway industry staff in attendance. Their actions at the outset of the incident are key to establishing what has taken place, commencing an investigation and minimising disruption.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BTP Area Duty Officer</strong></td>
<td>The Area Duty Officer should manage Area resources in dealing with fatality incidents and where practicable manage the incident at the scene. Working in close dialogue with the FCR Duty Officer is essential. There should be a focus also on leading on the contact with the Next of Kin. On occasions the Area Duty Officer will take command of the incident. There should be a clear transfer of command recorded on Command and Control. This will include working with Network Rail to minimise disruption and to partially reopen parts of the network where possible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Area Senior/Detective On Call</strong></td>
<td>The Area Senior on call will commonly require an overview of the incident to ensure lateral communication with senior managers within the railway industry. In addition, they may have an overview of unexplained fatalities.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Area On Call Detective</strong></th>
<th>The Area On-Call Detective should be informed of incidents by the FCR Duty Officer that are categorised as unexplained or suspicious. They will become the Investigating Officer (IO). The IO should support the Incident Commander. Where necessary, this initial investigating officer role can be undertaken remotely. They should also deploy CID resources and support the Incident Commander in the forensic strategy.</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Senior Investigating Officer (FHQ)</strong></td>
<td>Force SIO’s should be advised of all unexplained fatalities and suspicious incidents. Early discussions should be undertaken between the SIO and the Incident Commander. A key role of the SIO may be to advise the Incident Commander following an unexplained classification. In unexplained incidents on occasions the SIO may become the Incident Commander, in suspicious incidents they should perform the Incident Commander role. They should consider attending the scene of suspicious incidents or alternatively they may deploy the Investigating Officer (IO) to the scene and have a remote overview.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Crime Scene Examiner</strong></td>
<td>A CSE should in addition be deployed to all suspicious/unexplained fatalities. They should also assist in identifying a forensic strategy in relation to the scene. Multiple/double fatalities should be attended by the CSE.</td>
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4.2 Force Control Room Operators (Initial Actions)

1. Establish the location and circumstances of the incident. Also ensure a Mobile Operations Manager (MOM) is attending from Network Rail
2. What is known in relation to the person involved? Have signs of life been checked?
3. Deploy Resources from BTP and obtain an ETA. Also, consider Inter Area BTP deployments (Example LN Area assisting VW Area)
4. Deploy resources from Ambulance and Fire and Local Police where appropriate
5. Ascertain whether the trains have been stopped prior to attendance by officers. Ensure that information is passed to attending officers
6. Inform Crime Scene Examiners where requested by the FCR Duty Officer
7. Request missing person checks and vehicle checks in the vicinity of the incident by local police
8. Where the person is believed to be or reported as deceased, ascertain if undertakers are on route and obtain the time and name of the person who declared the death on Command & Control
9. Throughout these actions ensure that all information and results of checks are passed to the Force Control Room Duty Officer

4.3 Force Control Room Duty Officers (Initial Actions)

1. Undertake the role of Initial Incident Commander
2. Establish the initial circumstances from FCR Operators
3. Ensure that there is a sufficient response from both BTP and partner agencies. Consider Area deployments
4. Establish an overview of the condition of the person and arrange the appropriate medical response
5. Where the person is deceased contact the HM Coroner/Procurator Fiscal
6. Request initial scene assessment results from officers on their attendance
7. Where necessary request that contact with a Crime Scene Examiner is made and consider Area support if a response is likely
8. Obtain a detailed account from the train driver/witness. If the incident appears to be unexplained request fast time tasks prior to classification. These tasks could include the searching of bodies for identification and relevant checks. In addition, CCTV enquiries and results of local vehicle and missing person checks should be requested
9. Where information is gained in relation to the person involved in the incident ensure that checks are completed on the person. The checks should be completed in the first instance by the Real Time Intelligence Officer (RTI) or through the FCR Operators. Checks of systems such as PNC, BTP & Local Police Intelligence systems and Command & Control should be completed. Open source social networking sites should also be accessed if available
10. Liaise with the Railway Controller/Prime/Network Operations Centre (NOC-London Underground)
11. Contact the Area Senior on Call; The Area Senior Detective and FHQ Senior Detective must also consider the media. A full overview of the circumstances and fast time enquiries must be provided with a rationale. In addition there should be a briefing relating to the disruption being caused by the incidents
12. Consider strategies to minimise disruption, this could be achieved by detaining persons, covering bodies, partially re-opening the railway and diverting services
13. Where carrying out the incident Commander’s role, ensure that constant assessments of incoming information are completed as per the NDM
14. Consider contacting other investigative bodies, e.g. RAIB/CR and HSE where necessary.
15. Retain command of the incident until transferring command to an officer who is better placed to direct the operation. If a transfer of command takes place, ensure the log is updated
4.4 Area Based Officers in Attendance (Initial Actions)

1. Check for signs of life and preserve the life of the individual
2. Carry out a full scene assessment as per guidance (Section 5)
3. Establish the scene and commence a scene log
4. Where the person is deceased ascertain the time of death and who declared the person deceased
5. Conduct a search of the person and personal property (as per guidance relating to identifying the person through a search) and pass information to the FCR for intelligence checks
6. Carry out vehicle checks in the local area of the incident
7. Obtain details and accounts of witnesses
8. Carry out CCTV enquiries as per guidance
9. Remove the person from the scene as directed

4.5 Area Duty Officer (Initial Actions) to attend the scene unless impractical.

1. Ensure that attending officers have checked for signs of life and preserved life where possible
2. Direct resources at the scene and agree with FCR Duty Officer who should be the appropriate Incident Commander and record this and the rationale on the Command and Control log
3. Working closely with the railway industry to supervise the health and safety of personnel at the scene
4. Ensure that a scene assessment and scene log have been commenced where practicable
5. Ensure that individuals at the scene are conducting fast time actions including:
   - CCTV enquiries
   - Enquiries to identify the deceased
   - Attempts to trace witnesses and accounts
6. Liaise with the railway staff and colleagues at the scene
7. Supervise where appropriate the covering of bodies, partial reopenings and de-training services
8. Update the FCR Duty Officer/Incident Commander on all initial fast time activities being completed at the scene by staff to enable classification assessments
5. **Golden Hour (Fast Track Actions) and Pre Classification Assessment Process**

5.1 The term golden hour refers to the principle that effective early actions can result in securing significant information and material. The recovery of such material and information can result in the investigation making rapid progress. Making early progress can be achieved through the use of fast track actions. This process will assist in ascertaining early on if the incident is to be treated as suspicious, unexplained or non suspicious and will aid the subsequent investigation.

5.2 Initial fast time actions principally include:

- Preserve life
- Preserving the scene
- Preserving evidence
- Identifying victims, significant witnesses and suspects
- Fast track interviews
- Early Scene Assessment
- Assessment – intelligence reference the person(s) involved and the location
- Train Driver/Witness Account
- CCTV enquiries
- A search of the person and any identification and post intelligence checks
- Checks in the local area for vehicles
- Inform the Next of Kin

5.3 The process of reviewing and updating fast track actions should commence from the moment the Incident Commander is in place. Where actions are requested these must be recorded and regularly reviewed.

5.4 At the outset of a report of a fatal incident there will be fast track actions that will help to determine whether the incident should be treated as non suspicious, suspicious or unexplained. The early enquires and response will be vital in establishing this early information and assisting in the appropriate resources attending. It is essential that all updates from the scene and decisions made are directed through to the Force Control Room and Incident Commander for recording on Command and Control.

5.5 The investigation into the loss of life is one of the most important responsibilities the police have. A fatal incident will often cause disruption to the railway network and a risk of harm to passengers on affected trains. The classification will define what level of disruption is likely to be caused. Therefore it is essential that initial actions are carried out expeditiously in order that a classification can be made.

5.6 Driver and eye witness accounts are key to ascertaining what has happened and form the core information to enable a non suspicious or suspicious classification early in the investigation. These accounts can help non suspicious, suspicious and unexplained classifications. In non suspicious cases, this should enable the expedient removal of the body with the dignity and respect of the deceased being paramount. In suspicious classifications, an early account would assist in the establishment of an investigation team and wider scene preservation.

5.7 On occasions the witness accounts will be inconclusive amounting to a potential unexplained classification. In such cases initial actions should be completed to assist in determining whether the incident is suspicious or non suspicious. Such actions should include efforts to identify the person involved and building an intelligence picture. In addition, fast time CCTV enquiries, searching the body and the initial scene assessment by officers should be completed. This may disclose information to enable an appropriate classification promptly.

5.8 As information is received, as outlined in Section 2, the National Decision Model (NDM) should be utilised to aid the decision making processes, with the recording of rationale. Where the classification is being reassessed due to new incoming information (example – unexplained where
new information to suggest that the incident is non-suspicious) then the rational for reclassification should be recorded.

5.9 Within the initial actions there are also strategies to deal with situations where there is anticipated disruption to train services. In these circumstances, there should always be the consideration for the health and safety of passengers remaining on trains for long periods of time and the likelihood of flashpoints in such incidents. Early communications and logistical considerations in partnership with the railway industry are essential in such cases.

5.10 The following actions are recognised activities that could be utilised to assist in the classification process. The actions should be treated as guidance and are not exhaustive. Neither are they necessarily sequential.

5.11 It is acceptable to step outside of the guidance where it is reasonable to do so and you can provide rationale for doing so.
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**Scene Assessment**

- Officer Scene Assessment
  - Check for Signs of Life (Essential)
    - Yes: Medical Care Takes Primacy
    - No: Entrances and Exits
      - Is this an unauthorised crossing or known short cut?
      - Body Condition
        - Blood Splatters, Footprints, item of property or drag marks near deceased
        - Obvious Signs of suspicious activity i.e. struggle, weapons or unexplained items near the body, clothing removed etc
          - Scene Log commenced recording current and previous persons in attendance, enquires into train movements
          - Crime Scene Established
            - Info passed to FCR Incident Commander for log
              - Incident Commander to review classification
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Person Still Alive

Person Alive

Medical care takes primacy

Initial Scene and Incident Assessment

Full update regarding injured party, circumstances and scene to be communicated to FCR for recording on log

Injured Party Assessment

Detailed information regarding condition, this should include the initial injury assessment

Incident Enquires

Fast time actions should include driver's account, CCTV and witness accounts, ID of injured party

Initial enquires to ascertain reasons for injury, (trespass, intentional act other parties involved etc)

Injured Party removed to hospital

The injured party should be accompanied by a police officer and any statements or verbal communications should be recorded

Info passed to FCR Incident Commander for log

Incident Commander to review classification
Critical Incidents

Critical Incident Declared

Rationale for Critical Incident

Any classification of a fatality could be a critical incident

Contact media

On Call Media & Marketing

Engage with Industry
IAQ/NIAG
Youth board

Implement a Community Bronze

Community engagement strategy
Develop C.I.A.

Implement a command structure in line with force policy

Strategic
Tactical
Operational

Local forces
PSU
Media

Identify support required

NPT
High visibility patrols
Station visits

Any incident where the effectiveness of the police response is likely to have a significant impact on the confidence of the victim, their family and/or the Community.

Continual assessment by command structure
Multiple Fatalities

- Assessed multiple fatalities
  - FCR to be fully updated
    - Consider Critical Incident Policy
    - Consider a Major Incident

  - Potential scene established
    - Description of persons involved, ages, heights and body parts identified. Is a minor involved?

  - Due to the complex nature CSE should be considered regardless of classification

  - CSE attendance should be considered

  - Resources should be considered
    - Further enquiries required

  - Passed to Officers at scene/Area DIO

  - Incident Commander to review classification
    - Witness accounts, CCTV, access points. Enquires to establish whether the persons had contact with each other and their actions on train approach

  - Incident Commander consults with FCR and Area DIO
    - Should assess all information within the classification procedure and consider the impact on the community, the families and potential media publicity
Identification Through a Body Search

Unexplained/Non-suspicious Fatality

For the purposes of each incident this decision will be made by liaison of FOC and Area DIO or Incident Commander.

Command Structure Set

Decision by DIO/Incident Commander to search body post CSE arrival

There should be a presumption that the body and property on scene can be searched unless there is a good reason not to.

C & C to be endorsed with rationale

This should be done where possible prior to search but if no equipment is available it must not cause delays. This may also include sketch plans (PNS/log).

Body photographed by officers on scene

- Clean disposable gloves to be used and retained

Officer nominated to search body

- Each item seized to be individually exhibited and exact location on body documented

Body searched

- Assess any items found: Identification Documents, suicide notes, vehicle keys

Items found of significance

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Covering of Bodies

Body at Scene

Where is the body?

Service disruption

ETA of Resources

What are the present and future delays? How many lines are at the location? How many stuck trains? Is there or will there be station overcrowding?

Is the body on or off the track? Can the body be shielded/covered? Has the body been exhumed?

Undertakers
BTP Supervision
Resources

The assessment should include the evaluation of the above, the classification, the respect and dignity of the deceased, the position of the deceased, risk to passengers if the bodies remain standing.

Incident Commander will assess covering of deceased

Commanders should assess the covering of the deceased at the earliest stages of the fatality once BTP and Industry resources are at the location and a scene is established if required.

Non-Suspended Nominated Incident Commander authorises the body to be covered with a recorded rational. Consultation with Industry and FCN/DG should be completed. Unexplained where possible the body should be covered, any concerns CSE should be consulted.

Ensure the body is fully shielded from public view

This is to be done in Liaison RIO

Ad Movement of Stranded Services

The Incident Commander to review the resources at the scene and check ETA for CSE (unexplained) and undertakers. To allow a prompt body recovery for recovery (in unexplained cases)

Incident Commander should review resources

Incident Commander should review after 15-20 mins

The scene should be reviewed in conjunction with the railway industry in regards to the movement of trains. This should be with a view to closing lines with the full assistance of the railway and begin body removal with the minimum possible disruption to the industry.

Body recovery and railway booked back

Body recovery and railway booked back

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Death Following Police Contact/Custody

- Inform Incident Commander

  What were the circumstances of the original contact, recent arrest and bail, pursuit, arrest, domestic, sexual, serious offences, violent offences etc.

  What was the contact/custody When

- Consider Critical Incident declaration

  Does this impact on the classification process?

- Inform force involved

- Assess if the body can be forensically removed

- Remove body and record rationale

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6. Non-Suspicious Fatalities

6.1. The classification of non-suspicious fatalities by the Force Control Room Duty Officer should be communicated to all staff involved in the investigation as soon as practicable. Suggested efforts to remove and cover the body should also be made to minimise disruption. The objective to remove the person from the railway infrastructure and return the lines to the railway industry period as soon as practicable should be a consideration for officers dealing with the incident. However, in all cases the dignity and respect of the deceased and health and safety of BTP staff and partners should be the priority. Whilst the removal of the body should commence, initial actions (as outlined in Section 5) to identify the deceased and inform the next of kin at the earliest opportunity should also be carried out. It is also common that a re classification process may have occurred following a suspicious or unexplained classification due to new information coming to light. In such circumstances, non-suspicious processes should commence immediately.
Non-Suspicious Incident

- Required resources deployed

- Where possible early consideration should be given to the partial re-opening of lines and/or covering the body. A scene sketch or photographs should be taken

- All body parts and property accounted for?

- Declared Non Suspicious

- PCR DO contacts Coroner / Procurator Fiscal and NWR (Dignity)

- Consideration to be given to handing back the lines to rail industry pending driver arrival or train movement to enable body removal. The Log MUST be endorsed to reflect this and rationale

- Trapped Body?

- Details of body removal and recovery this should be passed by the Incident Commander to the Coroner / Procurator Fiscal as soon as practicable

- Log Updated

- Time of line hand back
7. Suspicious/Homicide investigations

7.1 At the outset of an incident, there may be indications of suspicious circumstances either ascertained from the drivers/witness accounts or potentially from a suggestion of third party involvement or scene assessment. A full investigation process should begin as soon as there is any suggestion of suspicious circumstances. However, the Incident Commander should continue fast time processes and NDM assessments (as outlined in Section 5).

7.2 A full crime scene(s) should be established and log maintained. In these circumstances the body should not be touched or covered without agreement from the SIO and CSE.

7.3 Both the Investigating Officer (IO) and FHQ Senior Detective (SIO) should be informed by the FCR Duty Officer/Incident Commander of the Classification and begin a process to ensure that specialist resources are standing by for deployment. The recommended processes under the Murder Investigation Manual should be utilised.

7.4 There should be an agreement between the SIO and IO as to scene attendance and arrange CID attendance as soon as practicable. Please refer to the Murder Investigation Manual.

8. Dealing with Unexplained Fatalities

8.1 If after an initial assessment of the scene, the drivers account and searches of the body, it is still not appropriate to classify as suspicious or non suspicious, an unexplained classification should be applied.

8.2 Following the classification of an incident as unexplained, there should be a continual completion of actions and re assessment to ascertain whether the incident is suspicious or non suspicious.

8.3 An assessment should be completed with reference to the below as examples:

- Train Drivers/Witness Account
- Initial Scene Assessment
- CCTV Enquiries -- Train/Station and local Force (where practicable)
- A search of the person and any identification and post intelligence checks
- Missing person enquiries with the local force
- Checks of vehicles in the locality
- Speaking to next of kin or attending the home address (where practicable).

8.4 The above in 8.2 and Section 5 should be completed where practicable in the initial pre classification assessment stage. However, it is accepted that on occasions some of the information may not be available within a reasonable timeframe. In such circumstances the unexplained classification should be made by the FCR Duty Officer in consultation with the Area Duty Officer. A clear command structure should be in place and the rationale documented. The relevant on call officers should be notified. This should include Area Senior On Call, Area Senior Detective and Senior Investigating Officer (FHQ officer on Call) – See Incident Commander flow chart.

8.5 There should be an ongoing and continual assessment of the initial actions in line with the National Decision Model (NDM) procedures. New information will likely come to light as the incident progresses and should be continually assessed by the Incident Commander SIO/IO. All decisions to reclassify the incident should be recorded with rationale.

8.6 Where the incident has been reclassified as Non Suspicious there should be an immediate communication with the FCR Duty Officer and Area Duty Officer and a return of Command. The fatality should then be dealt with immediately as a non suspicious fatality. There will be no need for a forensic recovery or other procedures relating to unexplained fatalities.
8.7 Scene Processes for Unexplained fatalities

1. The scene should be cordoned and a scene log commenced
2. Deployment of a Crime Scene Examiner where necessary
3. Command Structure should be implemented
4. Continual review by the Incident Commander of the ongoing actions in 8.1 above and Section 5
5. Consideration to partially re-open the railway and cover the body as per guidance
6. Appraisal of the HM Coroner and Procurator Fiscal where appropriate. In addition, the Home Office Pathologist may be required to attend
7. Forensic recovery of the body
8. Scene search post body removal which railway industry staff should assist in facilitating.
9. Workplace Deaths

9.1 Investigations into deaths involving rail staff in connection with work should be dealt with in conjunction with other agencies and initially as unexplained incidents (as per the HSE Protocol). The below is guidance:

**Workplace Death**

- Workplace Death
- Treat as Unexplained
- FCR DO to contact Coroner, Procurator Fiscal, ORR, HSE, RAIB
- Incident Commander to liaise with all parties to establish their functions
- FHQ SIO informed in all cases

- BTP should take primacy where criminal liability is suspected. In addition ACPO, HSE, RAIB and ORR protocols should be referred to and applied.
- Establish Primacy
- Expertise from ORR and RAIB should be utilised where required
10. **Sudden Death**

10.1 There are incidents where persons have died suddenly within the railway environment. Such incidents occur in railway stations and on trains and all efforts should be made to respect the dignity of the deceased in such incidents. Early liaison with the next of kin is essential in such incidents.

![Sudden Death Diagram]

- **Suspected Sudden Death**
  - **Check for signs of Life / Administer First Aid**
    - Medical care takes primacy
  - **Details recorded on log**
  - **Death certified by Paramedic / Doctor**
    - **FCR DO to contact Coroner / PF and arrange undertaker**
      - Where deceased has been removed prior to police arrival, they should attend hospital/mortuary where deceased is now located
  - **Local supervision to maintain an overview of the conveyance of death messages to next of kin and establishing identity of deceased**
    - **Sympathy Messages and Identification**
      - **Area DO should review incident and consider community impact**
11. Dealing with the Next of Kin and Community Considerations

11.1 A critical function of fatality management is how we engage with the Next of Kin and deliver death messages. Ensuring that the message is delivered in an appropriate and professional manner can impact significantly on the reputation of BTP and also community confidence.

11.2 The guidance relating to dealing with the Next of Kin should be applied (appendix A).

11.3 However, some key considerations are below and will require an overview by the Incident Commander:

- **Death of parent(s)/or guardian** – There are some incidents resulting in children and vulnerable persons being left without a parent or guardian following a fatality. Appropriate initial care should be discussed with the local authorities and also S.46 Children’s Act 1989 by officers should be applied where appropriate

- **Death of other people** – On occasions such instances have involved a fatality on the railway and then the discovery of persons who have been seriously injured or deceased when officers have attended the Next of Kin address. These instances will often become homicide investigations and as such liaison with the local force should commence. If officers attend an address and cannot get a reply there should be considerations in line with the NDM to force entry where appropriate

- **The Next of Kin displaying and discussing suicidal tendencies** - In view of the death of a loved one, any signs of suicidal tendencies or inclinations should be reported to supervision for an overview. The consideration of aftercare and PIER Plan is critical in such cases

- **Issues relating to Social Networking** - Recently there have been high profile cases of deaths being posted on Social Networking sites (Twitter, Facebook etc) prior to the next of kin being contacted by police. Great care should be taken in these circumstances and contact in person should be made with the next of kin as soon as practicable

- **Religious Considerations** – There should be an understanding and awareness of their cultural and religious beliefs prior to attending addresses and passing death messages

- **Community Impact and engagement** – There should be consideration as to complete a Community Impact assessment, community engagement strategy and carry out engagement with stakeholders and community members. There should also be consideration to contact the Force Area Advisory Groups. This is will be particularly common in critical incidents (see Section 5 and Critical Incident Policy). The role of Media and Marketing will also be an essential part of maintaining community confidence.